



Hacettepe University
Graduate School of Social Sciences
Department of English Language and Literature

**THE MAKING OF AFRO-CARIBBEAN CONSCIOUSNESS
AND IDENTITY IN THE POETRY OF LINTON KWESI JOHNSON,
DAVID DABYDEEN AND FRED D'AGUIAR**

Dilek SARIKAYA

Ph. D. Dissertation

Ankara, 2009

**THE MAKING OF AFRO-CARIBBEAN CONSCIOUSNESS
AND IDENTITY IN THE POETRY OF LINTON KWESI JOHNSON,
DAVID DABYDEEN AND FRED D'AGUIAR**

Dilek SARIKAYA

Hacettepe University
Graduate School of Social Sciences
English Language and Literature


Ph. D. Dissertation

Ankara, 2009

KABUL VE ONAY

Dilek SARIKAYA tarafından hazırlanan “The Making of Afro-Caribbean Consciousness and Identity in the Poetry of Linton Kwesi Johnson, David Dabydeen and Fred D’Aguiar” başlıklı bu çalışma, 4 Aralık 2009 tarihinde yapılan savunma sınavı sonucunda başarılı bulunarak jürimiz tarafından Doktora Tezi olarak kabul edilmiştir.


Prof. Dr. A. Deniz BOZER (Başkan)


Prof. Dr. Burçin EROL (Danışman)


Prof. Dr. Serpil OPPERMANN


Doç. Dr. Huriye REİS


Yrd. Doç. Dr. Margaret SÖNMEZ

Yukarıdaki imzaların adı geçen öğretim üyelerine ait olduğunu onaylıyorum.

Prof. Dr. İrfan ÇAKIN
Enstitü Müdürü

BİLDİRİM

Hazırladığım tezin tamamen kendi çalışmam olduğunu ve her alıntıya kaynak gösterdiğimi taahhüt eder, tezimin kağıt ve elektronik kopyalarının Hacettepe Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü arşivlerinde aşağıda belirttiğim koşullarda saklanmasına izin verdiğimi onaylarım:

- Tezimin tamamı her yerden erişime açılabilir.
- Tezim sadece Hacettepe Üniversitesi yerleşkelerinden erişime açılabilir.
- Tezimin 2 yıl süreyle erişime açılmasını istemiyorum. Bu sürenin sonunda uzatma için başvuruda bulunmadığım takdirde, tezimin tamamı her yerden erişime açılabilir.

4 Aralık 2009



Dilek SARIKAYA

To my husband, and my lifelong friend *Ü. Cem SARIKAYA*,

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe a special gratitude to my advisor Prof. Dr. Burçin EROL for her encouragement, patience and academic guidance. She was always with me to comfort me when I felt blocked, and was ready to provide academic and psychological support whenever I needed.

I should also express my gratitude to the members of my examination committee, Prof. Dr. Himmet UMUNÇ and Prof. Dr. Serpil OPPERMANN who contributed a lot to the improvement of my work with their invaluable academic support.

Further, I feel indebted to my parents Mehmet and Elif BULUT who always loved and supported me all my life.

Last but not the least, I should express my warmest thanks to my husband who appreciated my commitment to the academic career and helped me overcome my difficulties by supporting and comforting me.

ÖZET

SARIKAYA, Dilek. *Linton Kwesi Johnson, David Dabydeen ve Fred D'Aguiar'ın Şiirlerinde Afro-Karayip Bilinci ve Kimliğinin Oluşturulması*. Doktora Tezi, Ankara, 2009.

Farklı bölgesel, etnik, cinsiyet ve sınıflara ses veren çağdaş İngiliz şiirinin çeşitliliği ve çoksesliliği içerisinde, Britanya'da daha önce toplum tarafından dışlanmış olan siyahi şairlerin yazmış olduğu şiirler, çağdaş İngiliz şiirinin sadece bir dalını oluşturmaktadır. Britanya'da yaşayan ötekileştirilmiş ve susturulmuş gruplara ses vermek amacıyla ortaya çıkan Linton Kwesi Johnson, David Dabydeen ve Fred D'Aguiar'ın şiirlerinde ulusal kimliğin tanımlanması ve ırkçı baskılar konu edilmiştir. Kendi uluslarına duydukları sorumlulukla hareket eden bu üç şair, Afro-Karayip kökenleriyle bağlarını koparmış olan genç nesil siyahılara, kendi tarihlerini aktarma görevini üstlenmişlerdir. Genç nesil siyahi nüfusun, Afro-Karayip kültürü ve gelenekleriyle yakın bir bağ kuramamasının doğuracağı tehlikeleri önceden gören bu şairler, günümüz Britanya'daki siyah insanların kökleriyle olan bağlarını tekrar kurmak için çalışmışlardır. Siyahi ulusal kimliğin oluşturulmasına yönelik bir farkındalık yaratarak ırkçılıkla savaşmanın gerekliliği konusu, Johnson, Dabydeen ve D'Aguiar tarafından sürekli olarak altı çizilerek ifade edilmiştir. Bu nedenle, bu üç şairin ortak noktası, siyahların ortak tarihsel geçmişini, günümüz Britanya'sında yaşayan siyahların hayatıyla birlikte sunarak, Afro-Karayip kültürel mirasını çağdaş İngiliz şiirinde canlandırmaya çalışmalarıdır. Bu sebeple, bu çalışmanın amacı Linton Kwesi Johnson'ın *Voices of the Living and the Dead* (1974), *Inglan is a Bitch* (1980) ve *Tings an Times* (1991), David Dabydeen'in *Slave Song* (1984), *Coolie Odyssey* (1988) ve *Turner* (1994), ve Fred D'Aguiar'ın *Mama Dot* (1985), *Airy Hall* (1989) ve *British Subjects* (1993) isimli şiir kitaplarındaki ırkçılık kavramları, ve bu şairlerin ırkçılıkla savaşmak için birleştirici bir ulusal kimlik oluşturma çabaları incelenmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler

Çağdaş İngiliz şiiri, İngiliz siyahi şiiri, Afro-Karayip kimliği, ırkçılık, Linton Kwesi Johnson, Fred D'Aguiar, David Dabydeen.

ABSTRACT

SARIKAYA, Dilek. *The Making of Afro-Caribbean Consciousness and Identity in the Poetry of Linton Kwesi Johnson, David Dabydeen and Fred D'Aguiar*. Ph. D. Dissertation, Ankara, 2009.

Within the context of a diversified and pluralistic arena of contemporary British poetry, embodying formerly marginalised voices of regional, ethnic, gender and class origins, the poetry written by black poets living in Britain developed as only one of the branches of contemporary British poetry. Having emerged out of a struggle to give voice to the silenced people of marginalised groups in Britain, the poetry of Linton Kwesi Johnson, David Dabydeen and Fred D'Aguiar is concerned with defining national identity and exploration of racial oppression. Being motivated by a sense of responsibility towards their nation, these poets undertake the task of transmitting black history to the young blacks who have lost their ties with their roots. Foreseeing the danger that the young generation of the black population has no chance of finding a direct relationship with their Afro-Caribbean cultural traditions, these poets are motivated by a necessity to re-establish the roots of black people in contemporary Britain. The necessity to fight racism by constructing an awareness of Afro-Caribbean national identity is continually emphasised in the poetry of Johnson, Dabydeen and D'Aguiar. These three poets share a common concern to bring together the records of black history with scenes from contemporary black life in Britain, and in this way, they try to establish a black cultural heritage in contemporary British poetry. Hence, Linton Kwesi Johnson's *Voices of the Living and the Dead* (1974), *Inglan is a Bitch* (1980) and *Tings an Times* (1991), David Dabydeen's *Slave Song* (1984), *Coolie Odyssey* (1988), and *Turner* (1994), and Fred D'Aguiar's *Mama Dot* (1985), *Airy Hall* (1989) and *British Subjects* (1993) are analysed in detail, which illustrate the manifestations of racism in Britain and struggle of black people to construct a unified national identity by fighting against racism.

Key Words

Contemporary British poetry, contemporary black British poetry, Afro-Caribbean identity, racism, Linton Kwesi Johnson, Fred D'Aguiar, David Dabydeen.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

KABUL VE ONAY	i
BİLDİRİM	ii
ADAMA.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
ÖZET	v
ABSTRACT.....	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vii
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER I	
Manifestation of Racism in the Poetry of Linton Kwesi Johnson, David Dabydeen and Fred D’Aguiar	51
CHAPTER II	
Fighting Racism and the Construction of Afro-Caribbean Cultural Identity in the Poetry of Linton Kwesi Johnson, David Dabydeen and Fred D’Aguiar.....	111
CONCLUSION	156
GLOSSARY	162
END NOTES.....	165
WORKS CITED	174
ÖZGEÇMİŞ	

INTRODUCTION

In the opening lines of Hulse et. al.'s Introduction to *The New Poetry*, it is asserted that "every age gets the literature it deserves" (15), which is an accurate statement for contemporary British poetry. British poetry, from the 1960s onwards, finds itself in a constant process of revolutionary changes, culminating in the evolution of multi-dimensional variations of poetry expanding its scope. Since it is possible for literature to reflect the cultural and political circumstances that shape and produce it, it is not difficult to observe the transformation of "English poetry" into what is called "British poetries", as contemporary British society is transformed from a homogenised society into a multicultural society (Kennedy 215). Regardless of the Movement poetry in the 1950s which strived to preserve the "homogenisation" and "insularity" of English poetry represented by the poets like Philip Larkin and Donald Davie (Tuma 7), contemporary British poetry in the 1970s and the 1980s, "seeking out new models and positions", discovered a "new pluralism" (Hulse et.al. 25).

The influence of postmodernism in contemporary British poetry, during the last quarter of the twentieth century, can be observed in a blurring of distinctions between different genres, and in this way contemporary British poetry gains a "political sub-text" (Kennedy 252). It is also with the influence of postmodernism that, what is pushed into the periphery as the marginal is put into the very centre of concern. As a result, the poets who have been so far considered as marginal, become the constituents of the mainstream British poetry among which are gay, lesbian and homosexual poetry as well as black poetry. In terms of the use of poetic techniques, the traditional poetic diction is put aside with the influence of postmodernism and it is observed that the scientific discourse is also incorporated within the discourse of poetry. In this way, poetry gains an interdisciplinary as well as a polyphonic character with the inclusion of different discourses from different disciplines like the discourse of ecology or law.

Beginning from the 1970s, continuing to the present, the poetic diction of traditional English poetry is put aside in contemporary British poetry. The poetry becomes more socially oriented. Different discourses such as political and scientific discourse are

included within poetry. As Peter Barry also expresses, contemporary British poetry becomes “overtly politicised”, it becomes a poetry of “making statements which are feminist, or anarchist, or green, or pacifist, or Marxist” and in this sense its discourse is of a “scientific, technological, historical, or mythical kind” (15).

The reasons for the emergence of contemporary British poetry is also described by Kennedy as the “erosion of post-war consensus and greater economic and social division” which leads to the “collapse of a master narrative which many commentators would find characteristic of the wider condition of postmodernity in western societies” (7). In this regard, Simon Armitage (Scottish), Paul Durcan (Irish), Glyn Maxwell (English), Peter Didsbury (English) and Ian McMillan (English) are the poets who write against “totalisations” of grand narratives and challenge their validity (Kennedy 7).

From a broader perspective, contemporary British poetry’s reaffirming “the art’s significance as public utterance”, and in this way poetry’s gaining social and political overtones, provides poets with an opportunity to express their own political ideas, social views and individual identities in their poetry (Hulse et. al. 16). Moreover, in Hulse et. al.’s words, “the beginning of the end of British poetry’s tribal divisions and isolation” enables poets from different ethnic backgrounds to find a place for themselves within contemporary British poetry “while preserving their unique identities” (16).

Contemporary British poetry, situating itself against the mainstream literary tradition in opposition to the already constructed literary canon, came to be defined, especially during the 1970s and the 1980s, as the work of previously excluded or marginalised poets and as alternative and oppositional poetry, and thus, opened the path for experimentation in poetic practices both technically and thematically. Therefore, it can be claimed that contemporary British poetry is characterised not by a national literature written in favour of Britishness, but includes a diversity of voices in which poets of different national roots find opportunity to express their own distinct identity. In an English speaking society, contemporary British poetry has the potential to express regional diversities with the Scottish and Irish poets who present problems of identity and poets of Commonwealth countries, Britain’s ex-colonies, who deal with similar

problems of identity and national consciousness. In accordance with this, there are varieties of directions in contemporary British poetry among which Concrete Poetry, Language Poetry, Feminist Poetry and Contemporary Black British Poetry are observed.

Two Scottish poets, Ian Hamilton Finlay and Edwin Morgan, introduced British readers to Concrete Poetry which claims to be an international movement, putting emphasis on shape and typographical descriptions creating a visual effect and thus, transcending national and regional divisions (Draper 222).

While Concrete Poetry uses painting and picture rather than language, “L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E” poetry taken up by Robert Crawford and W.N. Herbert, experimented with the word itself focusing on the idea of poetry “being the reverse of what it is usually thought to be; not an idea gradually shaping itself in words but deriving entirely from the words” (Hulse et. al. 19). Poetry for the “L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E poets” conveyed political overtones as an expression of the linguistic subjugation of people. With the influence of postmodernism and the “dominance of discursive mode” on contemporary British poetry, language for Language Poetry becomes the subject of poetry rather than a medium of expressing ideas (Kennedy 14). The question of the power of language and challenging its capacity to provide communication are recurring themes of Language Poetry as seen in John Ash’s poems.

Contemporary British poetry also enables poets to express their unique and contradictory individual identities which are not easily accepted by the society. The politics of gender dealing with the lesbian, gay and homosexual identities also contributed to the plurality of contemporary British poetry. With a commitment to recovering the experience of the suppressed and unrepresented, an increasing number of women poets like Carol Ann Duffy as a Scottish poet and Jackie Kay as a black Scottish poet contributed to the establishment of a “significant role for poetry (in Britain) as a mode of feminist cultural politics” (Huk 9). Although till the 1980s no women poet’s anthology could be seen, in 1985 *The Bloodaxe Book of Contemporary Women Poets* and in 1987 *The Faber Book of Twentieth Century Women’s Poetry* were published

(Childs, *Twentieth Century in Poetry* 163). Similarly, *Penguin Book of Homosexual Verse* was published in 1983 and included both gay male and lesbian poems (Williams 1).

In addition to Feminist Poetry which deals with the individual and personal identity, Irish poetry deals with definitions of national identity. Seamus Heaney's use of "Co. Derry vernacular in his poetry" is followed by other poets from Northern Ireland like Paul Muldoon, Ciaran Carson and Nuala Ni Dhomhnaill who use the Gaelic language functionally to recuperate the forgotten history of their nation (Corcoran 197). Additionally, the poetry of Robert Crawford and W. N. Herbert is an assertion of Scottish nationalism with an emphasis on "Scotland's historical record of linguistic subjugation" (Hulse et. al. 20). Similarly, Grahame Davies is a contemporary Welsh poet and a novelist who writes both in Welsh and English and was the winner of Wales Arts Council's Book of the Year for 2002 (<http://www.grahamedavies.com>).

The pluralistic atmosphere of contemporary British poetry allows the formerly marginalised voices of different ethnic, class and racial origins to find expression in contemporary black British poetry, the development of which coincides with the emergence and rise of issues of immigration and racism after the 1940s (Niven 293). The emergence of contemporary black British poetry, thus, is not only the result of major political and cultural changes, "the pluralist" nature and "the more democratic" atmosphere of contemporary British poetry also enabled its appearance and maintenance (Kennedy 252).

Although black British writing is generally featured as a form of resistance poetry, striking differences can be explicitly observed between the first generation of immigrants and the new generation of black poets. The works of the pioneering black poets, who were the first generation immigrants of the 1950s, were not concerned with defining themselves in terms of national identity and racial discrimination. The most significant poets among the first generation are E. A. Markham and A. L. Hendriks. Those poets who moved away from their African roots were not concerned with the struggle to define themselves in terms of African racial identity; rather they were more

concerned with seeking the ways of belonging to their new homeland, that is, Britain. The “abandoning of traditional culture”, and “the sea memories of voyages” together with the hopes and aspirations of immigrants were the primary preoccupation of these poets (Niven 295). Using standard English in their poems, both E. A. Markham and A. L. Hendricks who were writing during the 1950s did not try to assert a distinguished cultural identity, and thus it is possible to claim that the first generation of black British poets remained insignificant and did not contribute much to the development of black British poetry. However, in the 1970s and especially in the 1980s, with the emergence of the young generation of black poets among whom are Linton Kwesi Johnson, David Dabydeen and Fred D’Aguiar as outstanding black voices in the contemporary poetry scene, black British poetry gained popularity and widespread recognition with its unique cultural identity among the audiences of contemporary British poetry. Hence, unlike the first generation of black poets who wrote with a need to affirm their Britishness, the second generation of black poets preferred to write against Britishness.

In black British writing, the term black is not limited to people who are descended from Africa, but it becomes an umbrella term which includes the poetry written by both coloured and black poets. As Niven states that:

Certainly in the last twenty years there has been much unresolved debate about terminology, with the term *black* often ceasing to be applied only to people of some African descent. Frequently, it has been transmogrified into *Black* and has been allowed to encompass the Asian diaspora (from the Indian subcontinent and China). I follow the view that *Black* should be read no more literally as a description of race or color than *Augustan* is of style or origin. (Italics are original) (295)

Thus, the term black cleared of all racial classifications becomes a comprehensive term which includes people from different ethnic nationalities. Blackness, in this respect, refers to a collective identity for black British poetry which incorporates poets not only of African but also of Caribbean race. Stuart Hall, in the same manner, puts forth a similar argument by reinforcing the notion that black does not refer to a peculiar nation or race in Britain, but it is used as a “way of referencing the common experience of racism and marginalisation in Britain and its come to provide the organizing category

of new politics of resistance, among groups and communities with, in fact, very different histories, traditions, and ethnic identities” (Hall, “New Ethnicities” 90).

The growing restlessness towards the problem of racism, its becoming a social and political concern in Britain and the increasing struggle of the blacks to come together under a unifying black identity have been influenced, to a great extent, by the American Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, which played a determining role in “a process of black awareness” and “black revival” (Zabunyan 424). While blackness was the major focus of artistic concerns, reinforcing the creation of “protest art” in the Civil Rights Movement, the Black Art Movement went one step further and claimed “a complete separation from Western artistic traditions and created a radical language using codes of identification specific to the black community” (Zabunyan 424). Malcolm X was observed as the most important figure in black liberation, and in the foundation of the Organisation of Afro-American Unity (OAAU) which had the aim of creating an “Afro-American united front based on nationalist ideology” (Sales 22). Malcolm X’s understanding of black nationalism and the idea of black power depend on notions of “self-defence; racial pride and solidarity in the face of the enemy; identification with Africa and colonial liberation struggle... collaboration on a basis of equality between militant blacks and those militant whites” (Novack 1). Malcolm X introduced a revolutionary nationalism and black radical thinking at the time of an “assimilationist-integrationist movement” and hence became one of the most important African-American leaders of the 1960s (Sales 27). Black people’s revolutionary struggles continued to create a consciousness about black identity in the United States in the 1960s. A similar struggle for black liberation from colonial domination was observed in France in form of the Negritude Movement which is a literary movement associated with writers like Aime Césaire, Leopold Sedar Senghor and Leon-Gontran Damas (Schipper 81). The solidarity of the black people colonised by the French, “a solidarity based on common suffering,” is the central idea of Negritude (Jack 63). “The literature of Negritude includes the writings of black intellectuals who affirm black personality and redefine the collective experience of blacks. A preoccupation with the black experience and a passionate praise of the black race” are the major concerns of the

Négritude Movement (Carlberg 1). As a leading figure of the Négritude Movement, Césaire, in an interview, defines negritude as follows:

It was really a resistance to the politics of assimilation. Until that time, until my generation, the French and the English but especially the French had followed the politics of assimilation unrestrainedly. We didn't know what Africa was. Europeans despised everything about Africa, and in France people spoke of a civilized world and a barbarian world. The barbarian world was Africa and the civilized world was Europe. Therefore, the best thing one could do with an African was to assimilate him: the ideal was to turn him into a Frenchman with a black skin. (Depestre 28)

As it is observed clearly in black movements in the United States and France, there is a continual struggle to construct a distinctive black identity by creating a consciousness. Resistance to assimilation and racial subjugation are the common features of black movements both in the United States and France. As a result, the social repercussions of black movements in Europe and the United States on the black movements in Britain are observed in the emergence of the Caribbean Artists Movement (CAM) in London in 1966 with the Caribbean writers John La Rose, Edward Kamau Braithwaite and Andrew Salkey (Ho 1). Due to the Caribbean Artists Movement, “the significance of Caribbean culture, its customs, rituals, art, music, folklore, language and above all its religion, took on their true meaning” (James 221).

Apart from celebrating the Caribbean artists, the main goal of the Caribbean Artists Movement “was to bring exiled West Indian artists, writers, critics, and even publishers together for the first time, in effect transforming the exiles into their own audience, with very productive results” (Breiner 98-99). The creation of the Caribbean awareness as a result of Caribbean Artists Movements, at the end of the 1960s witnessed the emergence of individual voices like Salman Rushdie, V.S. Naipaul, Ben Okri and George Lamming as novelists and Braithwaite, Wilson Harris, Denis Williams and Gordon Rohlehr as poets and Mustapha Matura, Derek Walcott and Edward White as playwrights (Breiner 100). Their works reflect the “diversity of hybrid spaces experienced either by those who came to Britain as immigrants, by their descendants born there, or by those who wish to trace their parents’ colonial origins” (Türe 5). Later the publication of *Bluefoot Traveller- An Anthology of West Indian Poets in Britain* (1976), and *News From*

Babylon: The Chatto Book of Westindian-British Poetry (1984) were important developments in becoming the voice of black and coloured people living in Britain (Procter 8).

Succeeding generations of black communities, situated in Britain after the process of post-war immigration from Asian, African and Caribbean countries, produced contemporary black British poetry which had become popular especially during the 1970s and the 1980s, a period of opportunities for new and alternative voices to be heard. Contemporary black British poetry is concerned with defining national identity and the exploration of racial oppression. The concept of identity is the common theme which is dealt with by most of the contemporary black British poets among whom are Benjamin Zephaniah (Jamaican), John Agard (Guyanese), Grace Nichols (Guyanese), Linton Kwesi Johnson (Jamaican), Edward Kamau Braithwaite (Barbados), David Dabydeen (Guyanese), and Fred D'Aguiar (Guyanese) (Niven 303). Therefore, among the social, political and cultural conditions that gave rise to black British poetry are the increase of racial conflicts, Thatcherite policies which fostered racism, the earlier American Civil Rights Movement and postmodernism which stand forth as significant influences helping the stimulation and flourishing of contemporary black British poetry.

The aim of this study, therefore, is to analyse the poetry of Linton Kwesi Johnson, David Dabydeen and Fred D'Aguiar in terms of representation of racism and their struggle to construct an Afro-Caribbean cultural identity to fight racism. These three poets are specifically chosen for this study because of each poet's introduction of a different perspective to the concept of racism on the one hand and the common aim of these three poets to construct a distinctive black cultural identity on the other hand.

The redefinition of black identity and the "question of victimisation" of the coloured people in Britain during the 1980s become major preoccupations of contemporary black British poetry (Draper 204). While black people on the social and political level "resist against discrimination in the form of demonstrations, protests, and 'riots'", black British poets on the artistic platform, are concerned with "cultural forms to register their grievances, express solidarity, and contest the politics of representation" (Childs, *The*

Twentieth Century in Poetry 194). Demonstrating clearly what it is to be black in a society, contemporary black British poetry continuously deals with “racist violence and oppression” that coloured people are exposed to in British society (Edridge 37). Fred D’Aguiar comments on the conditions of black communities which constitute the background for contemporary black British poetry as follows:

A generation of British-born and bred blacks had come of age only to find that Britishness did not include them. Jobs were not open to them, the police harassed them, there was an increase in racist violence, and subtler forms of racism, such as discrimination in the classroom, meant that black youths were underachieving in school and getting pushed into sport, or else signing on for the dole. This bleak picture fed back into the arts as poets tried to find ways of expressing this experience and articulating creative solutions to it. (“Have You Been Here Long?” 59)

Such is the condition that prepared the grounds for the contemporary black poets like Linton Kwesi Johnson who give voice to the marginalised people in Britain. Born in Jamaica in 1952, Johnson moved to London in 1963 to read sociology at the University of London, and joined the Black Panthers movement (Granucci 1). Johnson’s early period of writing which is embedded with inciting motivation for black resistance and rebellion bears the marks of the Black Panther Movement which is a political as well as a social and literary black organisation. Johnson himself explains the impact of the Black Panthers on his literary career as follows:

My initial impetus to write came from my involvement in the Black Panther movement. As a youth, as a member of the Black Panther Youth League, for the first time in my life I was exposed to black literature. I didn’t know that any such thing existed, books written by black people about black people... so my initial impetus to write had nothing to do with a feel for poetry or grounding in poetry, rather it was an urgency to express the anger and the frustrations and the hopes and the aspirations of my generation growing up in this country under the shadow of racism. (Caesar 64)

Among contemporary black British poets, Linton Kwesi Johnson stands as an important poet who has become a landmark in giving voice to the racial oppression and violence against blacks. Considered as “practically the poet laureate (and public spokesman) of black Britain” (Eldridge 36), Johnson does not concentrate on colonial racism and the impact of slavery on black people. As Page states, his poetry articulates

the “alienation of England’s black youth amid the experience of racism and police brutality” (29). He is a politically oriented activist poet who is “using his verse to fight racism and document black working-class life in London” (Wroe 1).

In an interview he openly says that “my generation is the second generation. I call us the Rebel Generation” (DiNovella 33). Johnson reaffirms the political nature of his poetry by describing his poems as works to be “read at rallies and demonstrations and cultural gatherings of a political nature” (Wroe 4). Incorporating musical elements into his poetry, Linton Kwesi Johnson gradually came to be known as a performer of “dub poetry” which is defined as a form of poetry “that can absorb and incorporate any kind of black musical rhythm” (Habekost 4). It brings together different genres of art and breaks the boundaries between oral and written literature, music and literature. Therefore Johnson, employing reggae rhythms in his poetry, tries to convey his political ideas in a poetic manner which is very suitable for the dub genre, the main aim of which is explained by Habekost:

The main concern of the dub genre is the poetic articulation of a political discourse. It voices the emotions of individuals exposed to intolerable living conditions and the systematic denial of basic needs. Depicting the reality of ghetto life, dub poetry engages with the forces responsible for this system of inequality. The question of race is of paramount importance, despite the generally anti-racist positions of most dub poets. (115)

Hence, Johnson’s poetry is characterised as “the communal experience of black diaspora in Britain” (McGuirk 51). The communal experience in Johnson’s poetry is an amalgamation of dub rhythms and overtly displayed political discourse of racial identity. Almost all of his poems in *Voices of Living and Dead* (1974), *Inglan is a Bitch* (1980) and *Tings an Times* (1991) are devoted to fight with racism on the one hand, and the effort to construct a distinctive Afro-Caribbean cultural identity on the other hand.

Johnson’s poetry is often associated with performance poetry which is considered as the most important part of oral tradition (Beasley 30). Liberating poetry from the printed pages, performance poetry turns poetry into an act of live performance in which both the audiences and the poet are actively involved. The existence of the audience is seen as a necessary element in implementing the “call-and answer devices and structures”

enabling the audience to contribute and participate during the act of performing poetry (Beasley 32). Furthermore, bringing together the notion of protest with performance poetry, Joolz Denby approaches performance from a political perspective and associates it with black struggle;

I feel that the emotional and stirring nature of performance poetry, with its honest appeal to people's heart and minds, stands in direct opposition to certain factions within the poetry world whose stifling, outmoded and unrealistic regime celebrates and deifies the kind of 'British' repression and non-involvement that has allowed our country to fall virtually unchallenged into the grasping hands of a corrupt government who are wantonly destroying the fabric of our society. (26)

With regard to Denby's political understanding of performance poetry which provides the poets with a platform to express their social and political ideas, it can be claimed that performance poetry is used functionally by Johnson who tries to incorporate his audiences in his struggle of black resistance, thus he succeeds in creating a communal performance as well as transcending the barriers of printed poetry turning it into an art form which embodies "dance and theatre" as well as music (Beasley 35). After underlining the function of the performance in creating a "social memory" through which the "narratives of the past are re-visioned and the past experiences are transformed through the re-enactment of cultural forms" and thus, have affirmed "notions of black identity and feelings of belongingness" (294), Wright says that,

performance poetry also possesses efficacious qualities which transforms the performance into ritual. It engenders a collective, holistic atmosphere in which the audience participates instead of merely watching, where the audience 'believes' the words of the poet-performer (the truth-teller) as opposed to appreciating his or her work, and where an underlying objective is to elicit responses, even criticism and to effect transformation in some degree for the listening community. (294)

Therefore, with his use of performance and dub, Johnson achieves a revival of Afro-Caribbean oral tradition through his poetry. He succeeds in turning poetry into an act of cultural activity where he reinforces Afro-Caribbean cultural elements which include communal performance, reggae rhythms and song tradition.

Similar to Linton Kwesi Johnson, David Dabydeen is a Caribbean poet who is concerned with the issue of racism and racial identity in his poetry. Born in Guyana in 1956, David Dabydeen moved to London in 1961 where he won a scholarship to Cambridge and earned a BA in English Literature in 1978 (Eijkelboom 1). Although he deals with the issue of slavery by giving brief sketches from the everyday life of slaves in his two collections, *Slave Song* (1984) and *Turner* (1994), his third collection *Coolie Odyssey* (1988) combines the past experiences of slavery with the present day experiences of immigrants. Hence, it can be stated that while the poems in *Slave Song* and *Turner* have their setting situated in the past, the period of colonialism, the poems in *Coolie Odyssey* oscillate between the past and present, forcing the readers to compare the slave experience with the immigrant experience. Marian Gracias sets forth the importance of Dabydeen as a prolific writer and underlines the fact that: “As a writer, editor, professor, and critic, David Dabydeen is remarkably committed to critically exploring the literary contributions of the Caribbean diaspora and the often conflicting polygot identities that emerge from diasporic movemenst” (1). On the other hand, he is described by Chris Routledge as a poet who succeeds in “recreating the authentic voice of enslaved labourers on the Guyanese sugar cane plantations” (1).

Although Dabydeen’s poetry is committed to exploration of slavery and plantation life, another aspect of his poetry also needs to be emphasised. While he gives voice to the enslaved people in the Caribbean, he also displays vividly the institutionalisation of racism within slavery. Therefore, it can be claimed that both Johnson and Dabydeen deal with racism but their approaches to the problem of racism are entirely different. While Johnson focuses on contemporary forms of racism, reflecting the everyday experiences of black immigrants in Britain by analysing the relationship between the black and the white people, Dabydeen focuses on colonial racism by showing the physical and psychological exploitation of the slaves in the colonial period.

Fred D’Aguiar, on the other hand, is a poet who was born in England but was sent back to Guyana at the age of two, to live with his grandmother during his childhood (Slade 1). Like Dabydeen and Johnson, D’Aguiar also focuses on the problem of racism and its negative effects on the lives of black people. However, unlike Dabydeen and Johnson,

D'Aguiar concentrates on both contemporary racism and colonial racism, and the psychological trauma of the black people caused by racism. Furthermore, although Johnson and Dabydeen throughout their poetry dedicate themselves to the exploration of racism and creating racial awareness, Fred D'Aguiar does not seem to be committed to only racial identity and racism. For instance, *British Subjects* (1993) is divided into two parts; while he deals with racism in the first part, the second part of the collection consists of love sonnets and highly individual and personal poems rather than dealing with social and political issues.

Unlike Johnson's poetry which tries to create a collective performance, Fred D'Aguiar's poetry is characterised as an "individual perception and singular voice" with a much more "optimistic and positive tone" (McLeod, *Postcolonial London* 170). D'Aguiar's first collection *Mama Dot* (1985) deals with his childhood in Guyana and "celebrates in mock-heroic terms his grandmother's influence over his family in their rural village" (Childs, *The Twentieth Century in Poetry* 201). He seems to be preoccupied with his Guyanese childhood not only in *Mama Dot* but also in his second volume of poetry, *Airy Hall* (1989), in which his grandmother is again a prevailing figure, who is "treated as a mother Africa, the voice of black folk experience" (King 208). D'Aguiar's preoccupation with the past is quite different from Dabydeen's engagement with the past in the way that in D'Aguiar's poetry the past stands for the nostalgic longing of the poet for his childhood experiences and authentic village life where black folk traditions are lived, while in Dabydeen's poetry, there is a concentration on a distant past, the times of slavery in the 19th century, which does not reflect the poet's own experiences but his knowledge about slavery.

From a general perspective, it can be claimed that the poetry of Linton Kwesi Johnson, David Dabydeen and Fred D'Aguiar deal with the problems of race, racism and national identity as a reflection of the contemporary social and political events in British society. "Questions about race, racism and ethnicity have become important preoccupations of debate in the social sciences and humanities at the end of one millennium and the beginning of another" (Bulmer and Solomos 3). Considering W.E.B. Du Bois' prophesy, which he made at the beginning of the 19th century, that "the problem of the

twentieth century is the problem of the colour line - the relation of the darker to the lighter races of men in Asia and Africa, in America and in the islands of the sea” (11), it can be argued that Du Bois’s statement has not only proved itself to be valid for the 20th century but also for the 21st century where the issue of race and racism will apparently be a much more powerful element in shaping social and political relations.

In order to pursue the development of racism as an ideology within particular social and political circumstances, it is necessary to analyse racism in a historical context. With this aim, Bulmer and Solomos put forward an argument that shows the development of racism going hand in hand with the development of nationalism, as they state that “a variety of both national and supra-national processes are at work in influencing the development of racist ideas and movements, and these cannot easily be subsumed under a monolithic category of racism” (13). There are two significant points expressed by Bulmer and Solomos: one of them is the understanding of the development of race and racism in parallel with the development of nationalism, and the other one is the kaleidoscopic nature of racism which cannot be categorised monolithically (Bulmer and Solomos 13). Both the historical evolution of racism as a problem and its controversial structure need to be analysed in detail in order to understand how it works in different contexts.

Social and political circumstance that prepared the background for contemporary Black British poetry which deals with the problems of black and coloured immigrants in Britain revolve around the problems of immigration along with the issue of racism during the 1970s. Therefore, before analysing the poetry of Linton Kwesi Johnson, David Dabydeen and Fred D’Aguiar, it is necessary to examine the continual evolution of racism and immigration as a problem in Britain and discuss the emergence of the racial conflicts between the white and coloured population in Britain.

The concept of racism has been a highly contested and debated issue playing a socially and politically important role on the contemporary global platform. Racism in fact, is an “ideology of racial domination based on (i) beliefs that a designated racial group is either biologically or culturally inferior and (ii) the use of such beliefs to rationalize or

prescribe the racial group's treatment in the society" (Bulmer and Solomos 4). Attributing different origins to each human community, racism aims at creating cultural, social and class barriers between people. The configuration of racial issues in contemporary Britain goes back to the social, economic and cultural impact of mass immigration after World War II, which took place after the loss of the British empire at the end of the 1940s (Solomos, *Race and Racism in Britain* 3). The gradual racial restructuring of Britain has been determined by its economic and capitalistic interests which were essentially instrumental in regulating immigration to Britain (Brown 7). The homogenised structure of Britain is changed into a multiracial structure; as stated by Ian Spencer, "Britain had ceased to be a white man's country" (2). This multiracial structure brought about a series of problems for the black people like "struggles to achieve equal opportunity, fairness in criminal justice system, equal access to good housing and obtaining satisfactory education" (Goulbourne 75). The problems of "health, social and community services" were the issues that immigrants had to face during the process of their integration into British society (Goulbourne 75). Entangled within such unpredicted problems as an outcome of immigration, Britain found itself endeavouring to restructure its social, political and economic laws according to the problems of immigrants.

In spite of the fact that it was the United Kingdom that encouraged immigration for its own economic concerns, rebuilding its industry and reconstructing its cities, "there was the negative response of some of the majority white population to the arrival of migrants in what was perceived in sizeable numbers, although the United Kingdom at that stage was still a country of net immigration" (Small and Solomos 240). The process of immigration, which became a cornerstone in the transformation of Britain into a multi-racial society, can be analysed in two relatively related stages; the first is the flood of immigrants into Britain during the Second World War, and the second is the immigration after the Second World War which is known as the "post-war boom" (Brown 8).

Therefore, it may not be wrong to accept the Second World War as the first noteworthy development igniting the process of a large scale change in the social structure of

Britain. The demand for manpower to work in the war industry during the Second World War coerced the British authorities to recruit a great number of people from the colonies to work in the United Kingdom. For many of the people from the colonies, it was considered to be an opportunity to earn money. As a result, according to Ian Spencer, the number of people who were recruited voluntarily during the war is estimated as “1,350 from British Guyana, 10,270 from Jamaica, 800 from Trinidad” (17). What is quite contradictory is that, on the one hand, Britain encouraged workers to return to their own countries after the war, but, on the other hand, Britain implemented the “British Nationality Act of 1948” which encouraged the settlement of black immigrants in the United Kingdom as workers (Geddes 31). Due to the shortage of labour force for its economy, the British government executed its open door policy for immigration with this act, which guaranteed legal British citizenship for the people of the Commonwealth countries (Holmes 218). Those who returned to their country immediately began to look for ways of going back to Britain when they discovered that what appeared to be waiting for them in their country was nothing but unemployment. Having retained the legal right to enter and settle in Britain, a great number of people from former colonies in Asia, Africa, and India as well as Ireland, whose economies were ruined by colonial domination, wished to benefit from unrestricted entry into Britain. Black and coloured immigrants were welcomed by many British companies and institutions in the 1950s as a supplementary work force. A great social change subsequently took place in the structure of British society bringing about the transformation of Britain into a multiracial society following the mass non-white immigration after 1945 (Solomos, *Race and Racism in Britain 2*).

An increasing change in public and political responses to the arrival and settlement of black immigrants from 1948 onwards has been the subject of controversial debates in Britain. The “assimilationist model” was the first strategy employed by Britain to assimilate the minorities into the British social structure in order not to distort the homogenous and unified wholeness of the society (Parekh 7). During this period, as Solomos points out, the fundamental pattern of political discourse about race was mainly concerned with immigration and the integration of the black immigrants into society by trying to solve problems related to housing, employment and social services

(*Race and Racism in Britain* 58). The primary requirement of this policy was that an individual should conform to the social, cultural, and language structures of the dominant group. This policy is defined by Sandra Fredman as a “strict form of equality” which rests upon two assumptions; the first being that the dominant British culture is not just one of many, but represents truth and justice, and the second being that there is no value in the culture of the immigrants (13). The social and cultural adjustment of the new comers into their new country was thus considered to be indispensable according to the assimilationist model which shaped the political developments in promoting the integration of immigrants into the wider society.

The assimilationist model proved to be a failure by 1958, which is the turning point in the racialisation of politics in Britain. The impossibility of integrating blacks and coloureds into the British way of life and its cultural values was most clearly confirmed with the rise of racial conflicts that culminated in the 1958 riots in Notting Hill ¹. The white rioters assaulted immigrants on the streets, attacking their homes with petrol bombs (Goulbourne 57). Inevitably, the 1958 riots stimulated the emergence of an ideology which identified immigration as the primary cause of racial problems, and the conviction that the growing numbers of black people in Britain was a potential source of socio-economic problems and conflicts. Teresa Hayter draws attention to the integral relationship between immigration and racism:

Immigration controls embody, legitimate and institutionalise racism. They have both been caused by and caused a racism which has become deeply embedded and widely manifest in the rich nation states of the West, and especially so in their apparatus of control, including the police, the immigration authorities and private security guards. Immigration controls have their origins in racism. Time and again, in the history of controls, it becomes clear that the reason for them is not excessive numbers of immigrants, or any realistic assessment of immigrants' effects on jobs, housing, crime or health, but the supposed 'non-assimilability' or 'inferior stock' of certain immigrants. (21)

In other words, black and coloured immigration were conceived as a threat endangering the British way of life since those people who immigrated to Britain, instead of incorporating themselves into mainstream British culture, tried to preserve their own national identity by creating a kind of counter-cultural identity in opposition to Britishness. Hence, a radical shift can be detected, quite easily, in political debates from

the necessity of integrating black and coloured immigrants into the British society towards the necessity of controlling black immigration, and the gradual racialisation of politics as well as the “repatriation of undesirable immigrants” (Solomos, *Race and Racism in Britain* 60).

The social upheavals in opposition to Britain’s open door policy of immigration played an important role in shaping the public mind about the issues of race and immigration. “Contemporary discourses of national decline” caused by the presence of immigrants as “perceived threats to national cohesion” contributed to the creation of stereotypes and negative images of black and coloured people (Waters 216). Meanwhile, “focusing on the supposed social problems of having too many black immigrants” social and political debates in Britain were circulated around stopping immigration and preventing the entry of new immigrants who were perceived as a problem (Solomos, *Race and Racism in Britain* 52). It was estimated that while “21,600 immigrants had entered Britain in 1959, this figure increased to 57,700 the following year. Then, in 1961 it rose to 136,400” (Dorey 97). The popular newspapers reported on the economic and social results of unrestricted immigration of black Africans into Britain. During this period, the essential pattern of both public and political discourse about race was, for the most part, engaged with the social problems associated with black and coloured settlers. Thus, black and coloured immigrants were thought to be the main cause of social decay, criminality, and economic decline in Britain and they were “widely blamed for crime, violence and riots” (Hayter 29). The most important impact of immigration after the Second World War can be perceived in the “racialisation” of political debates within the mainstream political arena and the dominance of extreme-right wing movements with an explicit racist political stance in the 1960s (Solomos, *Race and Racism in Britain* 29). The white riots in Notting Hill and the racialisation of public opinion resulted in the creation of the 1962 Commonwealth Immigration Act, which put a check on immigration by requiring immigrants to have work vouchers that were designed to restrict the entry of unskilled blacks and coloureds, but to allow some dependants to join families in Britain (Goulbourne 57). As Ruth Brown points out;

the main effect of Britain’s first overtly racist immigration act was thus to institutionalise racism within the machinery of the state, rather than to prevent the recruitment of necessary labour power. Black immigration was now

perceived to be a problem in society at large, even though blacks, when they were needed, could still be brought to work in Britain. When the need for their labour was not so great, a thoroughly racist system of immigration controls would, moreover, help to ensure that black workers already in Britain could be blamed more easily for the rapidly growing difficulties which the economy faced in the years which immediately followed the introduction of the 1962 Act. (12)

Likewise, it was the 1962 Act that declared black immigration as a problem in Britain, which is contradictory to the fact that blacks were continuing to be brought to Britain when they were needed (Small and Solomos 237). This was an outcome of strong political campaigns against black immigration, and it introduced a distinction and conflict between the citizens of the United Kingdom and the citizens of independent Commonwealth countries who were subject to immigration control as “people who belonged to Britain and those who did not” (Goulbourne 55). In brief, the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act, which put immigration controls into force, is of utmost importance in the way that it marked a definite break with the 1948 British Nationality Act which provided blacks with unrestricted entry into Britain (Solomos, *Black Youth, Racism and the State* 36). The 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act is additionally significant in paving the way for the implementation of further legislations to control black immigration so that it initiated a series of immigration acts which aimed at enforcing restrictions and closing doors for immigration (Arnold 50). Accordingly, in 1968 and 1971 two immigration acts were passed with the aim of tightening control over the immigration and deportation of illegal immigrants (Holmes 218). Moreover, these acts ensured that the immigrants were subjected to control by annual work-permit, and thus to the non-renewal of permit (Solomos and Gilroy 20). In other words, through the immigration acts, immigrants were gradually reduced to a position of short term workers rather than settlers as these acts took back the right of black and coloured people to settle in Britain. With the British Nationality Act of 1981, all people belonging to different ethnic origins, even if they were born in Britain, were excluded from full British citizenship (Holmes 222).

However, Britain did not deal with the problems of immigration and racism merely by imposing restrictions. There were also positive developments. As pointed out by Solomos, in addition to the restrictive policy of immigration and state supported

controls on black and coloured immigration, Britain also tried to provide equality for those immigrants who had settled in Britain, and thus pursued a policy of “anti-discrimination legislation” which constituted a complete opposition to its policy of restriction (*Race and Racism in Britain* 78). The first Race Relations Act was passed in 1965 and it forbade discrimination “on the grounds of colour, race, or ethnic or national origins against anybody seeking access to facilities or services at restaurants, cafes, pubs, theatres, cinemas, dance halls and all other places of public entertainment or recreation” (Childs, *Britain Since 1945* 148-149). Race Relations Act of 1965 initiates the setting up of the Race Relations Board “with local committees to hear complaints and attempt conciliation” (Childs, *Britain Since 1945* 149). Accordingly, two consecutive Race Relations Acts in 1968 and 1976 were passed to extend the scope of the law, thereby necessitating the establishment of a Community Relations Commission. This Commission created to complement the work of the Race Relations Board remained unable to solve the problems of racial discrimination because, as Anthony Lester claims, “its conciliation machinery lacked teeth” (24). On this point, Anthony Lester says that it was the government and the politicians who were supposed to create a favourable public opinion against racial discrimination:

The government has a key role in this task. Political leaders should try to shape public opinion, celebrating the positive contributions of migrants and refugees. Race relations has become an issue dominated by political rhetoric and calculations of electoral advantage. Immigration measures...and the statements and assertions in Parliament and in press which marked its passage through Parliament, inevitably impair the endeavours of the Commission for Racial Equality to persuade employers, trade unions, local authorities and commercial undertakings to treat people equally, regardless of colour or race. (28)

It should also be taken into consideration that while the underlying message of the immigration policy was to keep black and Asian people out of Britain, the message of the Race Relations Acts, contradictorily, was that they were welcome members of British society. In every respect, the implementation of a series of immigration acts together with Race Relations Acts, far from solving the problems of immigration, served to legitimise the public opinion that immigrants were to blame for the problems that workers faced in Britain (Hayter 31). Subsequently, immigration acts, reinforcing racial discrimination and presenting immigrants as a threat to social stability,

contributed to the racialisation of political discourse via the mainstream conservative parties. Sarah Spencer states that the nature of British legislation is contradictory in relation to an immigration policy founded on the assumption that firm immigration control is the prerequisite of good race relations:

Could it be said that the policy has nevertheless contributed to positive attitudes towards resident members of minorities? The evidence again is not encouraging. A survey in May 1996 found that 59 per cent of black people and 39 per cent of Asians had experience of racism, over one-fifth of them experiencing physical rather than only verbal abuse. One-third of white, Asian and black people thought racism more of a problem now than it was five years ago. (75)

Within the structure of strict immigration controls, political debates began to move their focus away from the question of immigration toward racial issues in the face of the possible social and political consequences of massive numbers of immigrants “invading” Britain. Considering the issue of racism within the framework of the economic and social problems of the 1960s and 1970s, which ignited a widespread hatred against blacks, it is necessary to mention two important ideologies which occupy an imperative place in the creation of racist ideology in the political as well as the social arena.

The emergence of Powellism and Thatcherism played a highly important role in the creation and the maintenance of a hegemonic nationalist ideology acting as a catalyst in expanding the problem of immigration (Lynch 133). With the rise of Powellism during the 1960s and 1970s the political discourse of racism was transformed from dealing with the problems of black and coloured settlement to a racialised construction of Britishness which excluded or included people on the basis of race (Solomos, *Race and Racism in Britain* 59). J. Enoch Powell, a conservative MP for Wolverhampton, had an important influence on the development of racist politics with a special emphasis on British nationalism which is positioned against the people of the black and coloured races. Powell is famous for his speech known as the “Rivers of blood” speech that he made in 1968 at the annual meeting of the West Midlands Conservative Political Centre (Davenport 1). In this speech he stated his political ideas about immigration and warned people against the dangerous results of immigration. Powell’s ideas contributed to the

furthering of the racialisation of public and political discourse about blacks and coloured immigrants (Solomos, *Race and Racism in Britain* 173). Positing the black and coloured presence in Britain as a dangerous threat to Englishness, Powell tried to revive the concept of Britishness which relied on the notions of shared history, culture and blood ties which excluded black and coloured minorities (Solomos, *Race and Racism in Britain* 172). He asserted that the black and coloured population in Britain were “acting against integration, of vested interests in the preservation and sharpening of racial and religious differences” (Powell 4). This resistance to integration, for Powell, created a division and polarisation in the society. He began his speech by stating that “the supreme function of statesmanship is to provide against preventable evils” (Powell 1). The preventable evils in the context of Powell’s speech stood for the immigrants. For him, Britain was a country busily engaged in “heaping up its own funeral pyre” (2). He ended his speech with a proclamation saying: “As I look ahead I am filled with foreboding like the Roman, I seem to see the River Tiber foaming with much blood.... to see, and not to speak, would be the great betrayal” (5). Powell claimed to be speaking on behalf of the people whose anxieties about immigration were ignored by the politicians. In his speech, he declared that Englishmen had become strangers in their own country with the immigration of so many people from other countries:

It almost passes belief that at this moment 20 or 30 additional immigrant children are arriving from overseas in Wolverhampton alone every week - and that means 15 or 20 additional families a decade or two hence. Those whom the gods wish to destroy, they first make mad. We must be mad, literally mad, as a nation to be permitting the annual inflow of some 50,000 dependants, who are for the most part the material of the future growth of the immigrant-descended population. (Powell 2)

Powell, in his speech, declared that mass immigration to Britain presented a threat to the national character of Britain and further asserted that the unified social and cultural structure of British society would be undermined by the presence of immigrants from a different cultural and racial background who insistently tried to maintain and preserve their difference rather than incorporating themselves into the common culture shared by the British people. Powell’s views on race and immigration turned him into a “heroic figure and a true patriot merely concerned to save his people and their nation from invasion and take-over by ‘alien forces’ ” (Dorey 98).

Powell's immigration policies led to the emergence of a New Right with an "ethnic-ideological account of British national identity" (Lynch 43). Moreover, Powell's arguments about national identity and culture received attention, and were appreciated by the extreme right-wing political parties like the National Front²; because Powell's political definition of a homogeneous national community required a strong sense of patriotism and a common allegiance to the British nation (Lynch 44). Hence, Powell thought that allegiance to the British nation could not be fully experienced by immigrants who had different values and cultures. Immigrants were alien to the British culture, and integration was impossible unless the immigrants shared the same allegiance to the British nation, culture and sovereign. Therefore, according to Powell, an imperialistic concept of nation which is inclusive of different cultures is not possible, and for this reason it is essential to drop imperialistic illusions and form an inward-looking British nation where there is no place for a multi-racial society. Thus, Powellism as an ideology evoked a "transition from imperial to national status" (Rich 207).

Powell had significant influence on the Conservative discourse of race and nationhood later in the Thatcher period too (Lynch 133). The concepts of individual, nation and culture were all fused in the new populist discourse of Thatcherism (Letwin 38). What constituted the core of Thatcherism as an ideology was Thatcher's individual political style, conservatism in law and order, and a shift in economic policy towards tighter financial and public spending. Thatcherism emphasised "the importance of individual responsibility" in the way that "people should solve their own problems (or help their families and neighbours solve theirs), rather than turning to the government" (Kavanagh 11). Her economic policy was reinforced by her discourse on nationalism "expressed as the need for Britain to reinforce its sovereignty and reinstate itself in the world as a great power" (Smith 223).

Nationalism according to Miles is "founded on the principle of popular sovereignty" trying to "overturn monarchy and aristocratic government by an appeal to popular will"

(“Recent Marxist Theories of Nationalism and the Issue of Racism” 29). Furthermore, Anthony D. Smith focuses on the concept of the national identity:

In the Western model of national identity nations were seen as culture communities, whose members were united, if not made homogenous, by common historical memories, myths, symbols and traditions. Even where new, immigrant communities equipped with their own historic cultures have been admitted by the state, it has taken several generations before their descendants have been admitted (in so far as they have been) into the circle of the ‘nation’ and its historic culture through the national agencies of mass socialisation. (11)

It is clearly understood by these definitions that the concept of nationalism does not necessarily require ethnic and racial separation. The idea of nation is “called upon to provide a social bond between individuals and classes by providing repertoires of shared values, symbols and traditions” (Smith 16). However, Thatcher’s understanding of nationalism was the “British nationalism that sought to maintain internally the integrity of the British state” with an “advocacy of unionism and opposition to devolution” (Heath, Jowell and Curtice 58, 59). Thatcher’s ideology of nationalism required, first of all, “membership of the national community” since it “[encompassed] common identity and [was] expressed through a common culture which [linked] state and civil society” (Lynch 54). Indeed, the concept of nationalism is closely related with the issue of race; Thatcher’s understanding of nationalism is an expression of “racist nationalism” (Dixon 175), which is explained by Dixon as follows:

In speaking for nation / individual / family / ‘us’ as against state/establishment / sectional interests / ‘them’, Thatcherism uses racist nationalism to give its ideological project coherence and specificity... In this context, nationalism becomes the ventriloquist for a deeper, underlying racism. (174)

In particular, Thatcher’s extremely strict stance on further limits to immigration as the only solution for the prevention of economic and cultural decline of Britain turned her into a highly popular figure among the public. Thatcher tried to solve Britain’s problems by “attempting to get on top of inflation via tight monetary policy, seeking to cut public spending and taxes, rebuilding Britain’s defence capacity and dealing with rising crime” (Riddell 9). Britain’s past greatness and its recent decline due to immigration as the cause of Britain’s economic crisis, unemployment and rising crime rates were the discourses which comprised the ideology of Thatcherism (Riddell 9). Thatcherist

ideology, which was constructed upon “racial intolerance within the discourse on cultural difference” reinforced Powell’s assumptions according to which the British national community had to exclude immigrants who were distrusted and regarded as undesirable (Smith 54). Briefly, Thatcherism understood good race relations as dependent on the reduction of immigration. In an interview conducted by Burns, Margaret Thatcher described her policy of immigration:

Well, it must be very much less but you cannot decide the figure until you know those who at present have a right to come in. But what is quite clear is that we cannot go on taking in that number. You see, my great fear is now that if we get them coming in at that rate people will turn round and we shall not have good race relations with those who are here. Every one who is here must be treated equally under the law and that, I think, is why quite a lot of them too are fearful that their position might be put in jeopardy or people might be hostile to them unless we cut down the incoming numbers. They are here. They are here. They must be treated equally. (Burns 2)

Moreover, Thatcherism envisaged a cultural and “ethnic-ideological account of the nation” in which ethnic minorities were accepted into the national community on condition that they accepted the superiority of British values and adapted themselves accordingly (Lynch 133). Thatcher’s insistence on Englishness and its gradual decline through multiculturalism is called “monoculturalism”, which is the only way to refute the attack on Englishness (Kundnani 1). The monoculturalism of Thatcherite ideology was predominantly characterised by its emphasis on nationalism which was accompanied by a fear or dislike of foreigners because the British people no longer felt at home in their own country. In accordance with the ideology of Thatcherism, a commitment to British nationalism was expected of its members, while disloyalty was attributed to foreigners, “who [were] regarded as belonging to other nations and *ipso facto*, as having other loyalties” (Reeves 104). Thatcherism’s preoccupation with the significance of nationhood, which is identified through a combination of racial, linguistic and cultural criteria, uncovers a strong sense of racialism underlying its description of nationalism. Frank Reeves, analysing the nature of British nationalism, emphasises the impossibility of foreigners being accepted as members of the British nation as follows:

If racial characteristics, membership of kinship lines, or meticulous performance of some cultural activity (the acquisition of which is difficult) are

imposed as criteria for membership of the nation, it may be impossible for outsiders to become incorporated in a manner which satisfies the self-appointed guardians of a nation's integrity...British, or rather English nationalism matured comparatively early in European history. At this stage, lineage, geographical situation, and loyalty to the crown were all distinguishable as criteria for membership of the nation. (104)

Significantly, British nationalism, according to Thatcherite ideology, obviously depended on racial criteria. The idea of race, although not mentioned, is continually articulated along with the idea of nation to define Englishness. Reinforcement of the notion of Englishness in Thatcherist ideology can be considered as a sense of racial superiority. Thus, ideology of racism is encapsulated and preserved within the political discourse of Thatcher's nationalism although it is not stated explicitly. "The ideas of 'race' and 'nation' as in a kaleidoscope, merge into one another in varying patterns, each simultaneously highlighting and obscuring the other" (Miles, "Recent Marxist Theories of Nationalism and the Issue of Racism" 39). In Paul Rich's words "Anglo-Saxon racism may thus be in the process of resurfacing in British political discourse under the guise of a more nationalist conception of British identity articulated by the populist Thatcher government" (208). According to this ideology, it is imperative to take necessary measures to prevent the contamination of the purity of Englishness. By this discourse, black and coloured people are positioned as invaders who come to "swamp" British culture:

Well now, look, let us try and start with a few figures as far as we know them, and I am the first to admit it is not easy to get clear figures from the Home Office about immigration, but there was a committee which looked at it and said that if we went on as we are then by the end of the century there would be four million people of the new Commonwealth or Pakistan here. Now, that is an awful lot and I think it means that people are really rather afraid that *this country might be rather swamped by people with a different culture* and, you know, the British character has done so much for democracy, for law and done so much throughout the world that if there is any fear that it might be swamped people are going to react and be rather hostile to those coming in. (Emphasis added) (Burns 2)

Evidently, the presence of immigrants in Britain was conceived as a threat to the British way of life and they were considered as the "enemy within", constituting the crucial part of the national problem (Gilroy, *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack* 45). The social

and the political tension arising out of immigration can be explicitly observed in Margaret Thatcher's speech as she overtly points to the growing discontent and hostility among the British public against immigrants. Furthermore, racism was rationalised through the immigration policy which is the driving force behind discrimination.

Powell's and Thatcher's political ideas which contributed to the construction of nationalist discourses have a great importance for the understanding of contemporary Black British poetry and the poetry of Linton Kwesi Johnson, David Dabydeen and Fred D'Aguiar. The social and political results of the discourse of British nationalism which fostered the hostility between coloured and white communities during the 1960s and 1970s became the major issues that are dealt with by these poets during the 1980s (Eldridge 38). Especially in Johnson's poems like "Inglan is a Bitch", "Forces of Victri" and "Makin Histri" the poet's criticism of the extreme nationalist policies of Thatcher government can be strongly felt. Therefore, exploration of the nature of Powellism and Thatcherism as important ideological influences in furthering the racial polarisation in the British society is necessary for the analysis of the poetry of Johnson, Dabydeen and D'Aguiar.

The demand to exclude immigrants because of their cultural differences led to the augmentation of racism, even though the term race was never mentioned in the political language of Powell and Thatcher. Their discourse embraced the assertion of "distinctiveness of cultural identity, traditions, and heritage among groups and assumes the closure of culture by territory" (Stolcke 2). The concept of nationalism in Thatcherism and Powellism is predicated upon a cultural exclusiveness which inevitably brings about a racist discourse. Hence, it can be declared that the advocates of the restriction of immigration also fuel racism towards immigrants by "artificially increasing the scale of the problem" (Stolcke 2). The Conservative Party's racist discourse presenting the black and the coloured people as the enemy within, involved in criminal activities and undermining the social and moral structure of the society, relied on the notion of racial superiority which can be better understood after a detailed examination of the concept of race and racism.

The term race is defined in the *OED* of 1933 as “a group of persons, animals, or plants connected by common descent or origin” (87). Apart from a rather sketchy description of race, there is no entry for racism in the *OED* of 1933. However, *The OED Supplement* of 1982 defines race as a “division of man, the members of which, though individually varying, are characterised as a group by certain inherited physical features as having a common origin,” (997) while racism is defined as “the theory that distinctive human characteristics and abilities are determined by race” (1000). Then, the reader is directed to its synonym “racialism” which is defined as “the belief in the superiority of a particular race leading to prejudice and antagonism towards people of other races, esp. those in close proximity who may be felt as a threat to one’s cultural and racial integrity or economic well-being”. In order to understand the process of racialisation of the notion of race, it is necessary to turn back to the 18th century when the scholars were keenly concerned in providing scientific proof for the notion of race as an important element of social classification (Harding 219).

Beginning from the 18th century, the idea of race evolved coextensively with the development of colonialism, industrialism, science, immigration and population movements which motivated biologists and anthropologists to investigate “physiological variations of human races” (Miles, *Racism after Race Relations* 59). With the Enlightenment movement and with the rapid development of science in the 18th century, the term race became the subject of scrutiny for scholars who were keen on classifying human beings into races. Thus, the term was taken to indicate “morphological traits and biological inheritance” (Gates vii). Therefore, the evolution of race as a term is consistent with the newly emerging biological science of the late 18th century. However, this does not mean that racism did not exist before the 18th century. In fact, the inferiority and superiority of particular and classified races existed from the beginning of human history. The conviction that people could be classified according to their natural inequalities emerged in “societies founded on slavery, where it was used to justify social distinctions between bondsmen and their masters” (Cheboksarov 348). Similar notions had widespread recognition in “ancient Greece and Rome where the slave classes were for the most part composed of subjugated ‘barbarian’ peoples” (Cheboksarov 348). Accordingly, the Enlightenment thinker and philosopher David

Hume whose ideas gained widespread recognition in the 18th century, based his theory of human nature on racist assumptions. He ascertained the racist overtones of his philosophical conception of human nature in his article “Of National Characters” as follows:

I am apt to suspect the negroes to be naturally inferior to the whites. There scarcely ever was a civilised nation of that complexion, nor even any individual eminent either in action or speculation. No ingenious manufacturers amongst them, no arts, no sciences. On the other hand, the most rude and barbarous of the whites, such as the ancient GERMANS, the present TATARS, have still something eminent about them, in their valour, form of government, or some other particular. Such a uniform and constant difference could not happen, in so many countries and ages, if nature had not made an original distinction between these breeds of men. (208)

Hume’s racial prejudices can be observed in this quotation where he pinpoints the superior racial characteristics of the European race, while emphasising the natural inferiority of the black race. Concerning the moral and mental capacities of blacks, Hume continues his argument by stating that, “you may obtain any thing of the NEGROES by offering them a strong drink; and may easily prevail with them to sell not only their children, but their wives and mistresses, for a cask of brandy” (214).

Moreover, the acceleration of capitalism and colonialism after the 16th century, culminating in the 18th century led to the unveiling of racism on a different plane that in science, which would serve “as a pretext for the ruthless exploitation, and frequent extermination” carried out by the colonising imperial states (Cheboksarov 348). For this reason, the “term race as it is understood today, is not found in any texts written before the 18th century” (Rozat and Bartra 291).

As O’Callaghan states, the 19th century is considered to be the beginning of the “scientific consolidation” of debates on racism (3). In the 19th century, racism, that is, a set of beliefs, prejudices, and stereotypes devised by the White civilisation, transformed itself into a scientific category (O’Callaghan 3). Theories apropos “monogenism” which fosters the common origin of all human beings, and “polygenism” which argues for the several distinct origins of the races became the centre of biological concern (Niro 56). The essential concern that shaped the 19th century scientific discourse on race was

“whether racial variations were specifically created or whether they were developed over time” (Asma 6). The concept of polygenism, which found widespread support in the 19th century, bears utmost importance for the debates of racism during the process of its legitimisation. The African descendants and European descendants and all the other human races, according to the polygenist idea, represent fixed diversities, taking their diversity from their innate essential qualities (Asma 6). Arguing for essential and eternal divisions between the human races, polygenism considers African races as incapable of modification or development through time. Rejecting the notion of racial evolution, progress and development, polygenist ideology can be claimed to be the harbinger of racist ideology. The primary purpose of scientific studies was to provide a scientific ground for the genetic differences between superior beings and the inferior races. As John S. Haller comments:

The early polygenists favoured the term ‘species’ in their belief in the diversity of man. In the context of their definition, species were ‘fixed’ and did not naturally cross with other species, except under artificial conditions. Although there was occasional fertility between the species, the product of the union was sterile or tending toward sterility, proving the ‘unnaturalness’ of the original union. (1322)

As it is pinpointed by Haller, the purity and the fixity of races should be preserved in all circumstances by preventing the amalgamation of races through intermarriages by fostering an ideology that the union of differing races produces sterility (Haller 1322). The underlying reason for this ideology is not difficult to perceive especially when the continual endeavour of European race to keep African races at a distance, and maintain the hierarchy between superior and inferior races is taken into account. Forbidding the mixture of races, Western scientific ideology condemned the African race into a fixed and inferiorised status as an “inhuman savage” (Curtin 32).

With the contributions of physical anthropologist Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, and his ideas expressed in *On the Natural Variety of Mankind*³, Arthur De Gobineau’s *Essay on the Inequality of Human Races*⁴ and Darwin’s theory of evolution, particularly expressed in his *Origin of Species* and *The Descent of Man*⁵, along with the development of the term social Darwinism which perceived natives as weaker and more unfit to survive (<http://library.thinkquest.org/C004367/eh4.shtml>), racism came to

incorporate a further dimension by being defined according to biological differences, and this enabled Western colonial powers to explain the inferiority of the black race with so called scientific proof (O'Callaghan 4). Hence, it is biological racism which involves "measuring racial differences in intelligence", seeking "racial classification of human differences also in shapes of skulls, lips, noses, foreheads, pelvises, or sexual organs, in sensitivity to pain, in genetic or hormonal makeup, in skin colour, hair texture, and yet other traits" (Harding 219). The focus on difference is the most apparent scientific criteria for these researches and is injected into everyday discourse which plays a fundamental role in the establishment and widespread recognition of racism. In order to refute the idea of the existence of biological differences between human beings as well as the biological hierarchy of fundamentally different groups of people, contemporary scholars of racism have developed a second approach to the concept. Undermining the most important premise of biological racism, that is, race as a biologically given scientific truth, these scholars claim that race is a "socially constructed way of differentiating human beings" (Omi and Winant 128). Scholars like Stuart Hall and Paul Gilroy argue that racism is an ideologically constructed phenomenon which depends on the evolution of hegemonic power structures to legitimate exploitation, racial oppression and subordination. Stuart Hall puts forward the idea that "black is not a question of pigmentation," rather it is socially and politically constructed as a "consequence of a certain symbolic and ideological structure" ("Old and New Identities, Old and New Ethnicities" 149). By the same token, Paul Gilroy considers race as a "relational concept which does not have fixed referents" ("Urban Social Movements, 'Race' and Community" 409). Hence, prejudices, stereotypes and ideologies are not inherent but they are attained, learned and naturalised in representations which are expressed and verbalised in "discourse and may thus be reproduced and shared within the dominant group" (Van Dijk, "Discourse and Racism" 146).

At this point in the argument, it may be helpful to confer with Foucault's concept of discourse which will interrelate racism to the theory of post-structuralism. Taking for granted Van Dijk's argument that discourses may be reproduced and shared within dominant groups, it can be clearly seen that discourse has a great contribution in the

production, circulation and reproduction of racism as a social system of racial inequality and, at the same time, it is the main source of people's racist feelings.

The production of discourse, for Foucault, in every society is “controlled, selected, organised and redistributed according to a certain number of procedures, whose role is to avert its powers and its dangers, to cope with chance events, to evade its ponderous, awesome materiality” (“The Discourse on Language” 149). Foucault claims that discourse, which is controlled and organised by the dominant powers in a society, should inevitably be governed by the “rules of exclusion” (“The Discourse on Language” 149). Foucault argues that “we know perfectly well that we are not free to say just anything, that we cannot simply speak of anything, when we like or where we like; not just anyone, finally, may speak of just anything” (*Archaeology of Knowledge* 216). The working of this rule of exclusion in a society is structured by what is accepted as reasonable or not. As Foucault expresses it “from the depths of Middle Ages, a man was mad if his speech could not be said to form part of the common discourse of men. His words were considered null and void, without truth or significance, worthless as evidence (“The Discourse on Language” 149). Discourse, for Foucault, thus, is situated within “cultural systems” and is constituted and reconstituted within social institutions, “religious or juridical texts, as well as some curious texts, from the point of view of their status, which we term ‘literary’; to a certain extent, scientific texts also” (“The Discourse on Language” 152). He explains the social appropriation of discourse and its familiarisation in institutions:

Finally, on a much broader scale, we have to recognise the great cleavages in what one might call the social appropriation of discourse. Education may well be, as of right, the instrument whereby every individual, in a society like our own, can gain access to any kind of discourse. But we well know that in its distribution, in what it prevents, it follows the well-trodden battle-lines of social conflict. Every educational system is a political means of maintaining or of modifying the appropriation of discourse, with the knowledge and the powers it carries with it. (“The Discourse on Language” 156)

Discourse, as a system of thought, produces knowledge which is accepted as truth in a society. Foucault thinks that discourse and knowledge have another dimension which is power as a determining force in influencing true or false knowledge. In other words, all

the knowledge one has as true knowledge is the result and effect of power struggles. What is considered as truth is closely interconnected with power as an instrument of subjugation of other truths. Foucault explains the influence of power in the formation of truth as follows:

Each society has its regime of truth, its “general politics” of truth: that is the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true. (*Power/Knowledge* 131)

Accordingly, truth embedded in discourse is situated within certain institutions where it is produced and circulated, and it is subject to constant change, parallel to the economic and political changes and the power struggle between opposing forces: “It is produced and transmitted under control, dominant if not exclusive, of a few great political and economic apparatuses (university, army, writing, media)...” (*Power/Knowledge* 131-132). As has already been indicated above, the truth, since it is produced through discourse, is not fixed; on the contrary, the validity of truth depends largely on the capability of the dominant forces to hold power in their hands. Foucault specifies this as the “principle of discontinuity”:

The existence of systems of rarefaction does not imply that over and beyond them lie great vistas of limitless discourse, continuous and silent, repressed and driven back by them, making it in terms of speaking or thinking, we must not imagine some unsaid thing, or an unthought, floating about the world, interlacing with all its forms and events. Discourse must be treated as a discontinuous activity, its different manifestations sometimes coming together, but just as easily unaware of, or excluding each other. (“The Discourse on Language” 158)

Furthermore, different discourses come together and struggle with each other, and as a result, discourses which are not held by dominant powers are excluded. Therefore, there is a continual battle between discourses. This is the practice which Foucault calls “discursive practices” that give way to the construction of discourses in social institutions. Considered as systematic organisations, discursive practices are characterised by the “definition of a legitimate perspective for the agent of knowledge, and the fixing of norms for the elaboration of concepts and theories” (“History of

Systems of Thought” 199). Thus, it can be claimed that it is through discursive practices that certain ideas are excluded while some other ideas that are accepted as true are turned into discourse to produce knowledge, and, in this way, they are legitimated and established in a society. Foucault presents a detailed analysis of discursive practices:

Discursive practices are not purely and simply ways of producing discourse. They are embodied in technical processes, in institutions, in patterns for general behaviour, in forms for transmission and diffusion, and in pedagogical forms which, at once, impose and maintain them. Finally, they possess specific modes of transformation. These transformations cannot be reduced to precise and individual discoveries; and yet we cannot characterize them as a general change of mentality, collective attitudes, or a state of mind. The transformation of a discursive practice is linked to a whole range of usually complex modifications that can occur outside of its domain (in the forms of production, in social relationships, in political institutions), inside it (in its techniques for determining its object, in the adjustment and refinement of its concepts, in its accumulation of facts), or to the side of it (in other discursive practices). (“History of Systems of Thought” 200)

As Foucault expresses it, discursive practices are not merely forms of producing discourse but they are embedded in social institutions and are supported by educational systems to provide the circulation of discourse and thus, secure its hegemonic power structure. The idea of securing the hegemonic power of discourse should not be misunderstood because, as Foucault also underlines, the most important characteristic of discursive practices is the element of fluidity, that is the transformation of discourses. To put it more clearly, it is impossible for a discourse to preserve its validity and hegemony endlessly since there is a constant struggle between different discourses and, as a result, one discourse should inevitably give way to another discourse, so that it transforms itself into other discourses. Subsequently, from Foucault’s argument, one can conclude that discourse works as a system of representation through language in which certain ideologies are embedded. Accordingly, discourses are the agents which construct knowledge. Hence, as Foucault further states, even a scientific text which claims to be purely scientific and conveying true knowledge, is itself knowledge which is constructed through discourse and implanted with dominant ideology (“History of Systems of Thought” 200). For this reason, it can not claim objectivity or ultimate truth.

Within the structure of racism, it can be perceived that if it is discourse that produces knowledge in each society, racism in the same manner is produced through discourse, reinforced in social institutions and circulated among the individual members of the society who accept it as a true source of knowledge without question. Turning back to the scientific arguments of the 19th century about the classification of human races and the struggle of scientists to put the African races on an inferior scale, it can be claimed that scientific discourse about the inferiority of black and coloured races is the most important evidence which shows how discourse is constructed ideologically to serve the benefits of the dominant forces. Racism itself was ideologically constructed and fostered among the public for the legitimation of the economic and the cultural exploitation of the black and coloured races. Van Dijk pays special attention to the role of discourse in the formation of racism:

Especially because of their often subtle and symbolic nature, many forms of the ‘new’ racism are ‘discursive’: they are expressed, enacted, and confirmed by text and talk, such as everyday conversations, board meetings, job interviews, policies, laws, parliamentary debates, political propaganda, textbooks, scholarly articles, movies, TV programmes, and news reports in the press, among hundreds of other genres. (*New(s) Racism* 34)

Correspondingly, while on the surface, in the 18th and 19th centuries, race appeared to be grounded on biological evidence, it actually was used to justify contemporary political and social relationships. Hence, the concept of racism throughout the ages found its development through the instigation of social structure and politics. Racism, thus, becomes a driving force as well as an ideological tool which attempts to solidify the existing political order of colonial expansion. This ideology of racism denies accepting the colonies as nations with their own separate entities, instead, it legitimises the hierarchical power of colonial domination and thus, affirms “the political and economic hegemony of the metropolitan country through the importation of an ideology which included the ranking of peoples and cultures” (O’Callaghan 8). Finding an integral relationship with the ideology of racism and development of colonialism, it is necessary to refer to Franz Fanon who is preoccupied with the impact of colonialism on the colonised people of Africa.

Fanon's importance for the issue of racism lies not in his defining or theorising the concept of racism, but in his demonstrating the psychological and physical damages of racism on the colonised people. Hence, Fanon is significantly influential for the issue of racism because he demonstrates the integral relationship between racism and colonialism. In *Black Skin, White Masks*, where he focuses on the universal understanding of racism by putting forth such questions as "is there in truth any difference between one racism and another? Do not all of them show the same collapse, the same bankruptcy of man?" (86). He establishes some pertinent associations between racism, aggression and encroachment, domination and the development of individual identity. Fanon states that his aim is not to demonstrate the unreasonableness of the scientific arguments about racism but to show the psychological effects of racism on the colonised who is in a constant struggle to "run away from his own individuality, to annihilate his own presence" (*Black Skin, White Masks* 60).

Fanon obviously endeavours to display that even an effort to disprove the racist assumptions of science and religion as two strongly established legacies would be an unnecessary attempt, because they have already proved themselves to be false ideologies. He argues that it is not difficult to see the illogicality of these assumptions and win the argument by calling on "humanity, on the belief in dignity, on love, on charity" which will prove the equality of all human beings (*Black Skin, White Masks* 30). What Fanon attempts to is to focus on psychological reflections of racism by approaching it as a systematic tool functioning to support Western civilisation which he believes to be "representative and responsible for colonial racism" (*Black Skin, White Masks* 90). He affirms that his main purpose is to "help the black man to free himself of the arsenal of the complexes that has been developed by the colonial environment" (*Black Skin, White Masks* 30).

Fanon's contribution to the concept of racism is his investigation of the underlying structure of racism which manifests itself in various forms. "Debasement of the native language", "objectification of black people" who are pushed into invisibility and "negative stereotyping" are three important dimensions of racism that Fanon highlights in his argument (*Black Skin, White Masks* 115, 118).

As Fanon argues, the most important presumption which reveals racism, is the debasement of the native language and the necessity of the “adoption of the language of the civilising nation” (*Black Skin, White Masks* 18). Finding a relationship between language and culture, Fanon claims that the burial of the native language necessarily brings with it the negation of the culture of the colonised people. Fanon explains how language is accommodated in one’s authentic cultural life by giving an example of first-hand experience:

I meet a Russian or a German who speaks French badly. With gestures I try to give him the information that he requests, but at the same time I can hardly forget that he has a language of his own, a country, and that perhaps he is a lawyer or engineer there. In any case, he is a foreign to my group, and his standards must be different. When it comes to the case of the Negro, nothing of the kind. He has no culture, no civilisation, no ‘long historical past’. This may be the reason for the strivings of contemporary Negroes: to prove the existence of a black civilisation to the white world at all costs. (*Black Skin, White Masks* 34)

Furthermore, language is conceived to be the most important tool of integration and assimilation, and it has the power to open doors for black people into white society (*Black Skin, White Masks* 34). Only on this condition is “the colonised elevated above his jungle status in proportion to his adoption of the mother country’s cultural standards” (Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* 18). The reason for Fanon’s attributing primary importance to language might depend on the fact that language is used as the most important ideological tool to impose the cultural values of the dominant culture on the subordinated ones. This aspect of language is also specifically disclosed by Ngugi Wa Thiong’o as follows:

Language as communication and as culture are, then, products of each other. Communication creates culture. Culture is a means of communication. Language carries culture and culture carries, particularly through orature and literature, the entire body of values by which we come to perceive ourselves and our place in the world. How people perceive themselves affects how they look at their culture, at their politics and at the social production of wealth, at their entire relationship to nature and to other beings. Language is thus inseparable from ourselves as a community of human beings with a specific form and character, a specific history, a specific relationship to the world. (15-16)

In the light of Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's statements on language, it can be argued that Fanon strives to show that black people's gradual alienation from their own culture and traditions is the result of their avoiding "Creolisms", and Fanon continues his argument by stating that: "some families completely forbid the use of creole, and mothers ridicule their children for speaking it" (Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* 20). Creole languages, according to John Rickford, usually arise in situations where "people from different nations, ethnic groups and language backgrounds come into sustained contact, through trade, for instance, or on plantations fuelled by slavery, indenture and migration" (13).

Creole or Pidgin languages are usually considered as "marginal languages for two reasons: they were marginal both in the circumstances of their origin and in the attitudes towards them" (Muhleisen 23). Caribbean Creole is only one of the many diverse Creole languages all over the world, that "developed largely in the late seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries during plantation slavery and thus share a social history that is, while not identical, similar enough to be considered part of one story" (Muhleisen 56). The most important feature of the Creole language is its "hybridity" amalgamating the "African and European" linguistic elements (Hintzen 484). The hybrid character of the Creole language is explained as follows:

claims to purity, essentialised around geographic discourses of origin, cannot be accommodated in Creole discourse. This is the basis of the Creolists' discomfort with 'illusions of Africa and Europe'... The assertions of *créolité* are very much declarations that the European space formerly occupied exclusively by whites has now become hybridised. (italics are original) (Hintzen 485)

Therefore, the hybrid nature of the Creole language allows people to express their individuality and diversity. However, the language of colonisers put a sense of shame and blame on the native language which is a denigration of native in contradiction to Western values. The language that the colonised has mastered, far from signifying his incorporation into the civilised world, reaffirms his inhumanity and inferiority with its multiplicity of negative values and meaning for his existence. As Fanon says: "*Wherever he goes, the Negro remains a Negro*" (italics are original) (*Black Skin, White Masks* 173).

In addition to the debasement of the Creole language which shows one aspect of racism, objectification is the second most important manifestation of racism which is emphasised by Fanon (*Black Skin, White Masks* 88). He states that racism objectifies people by saying that, “all forms of exploitation are identical because all of them are applied against the same ‘object’: man” (*Black Skin, White Masks* 88). Objectification, he argues, forces people to accept the assumption that they have no real existence except in relation to the white man, which also means a denial of humanity, resulting in the violation of human rights and oppression:

I discovered my blackness, my ethnic characteristics; and I was battered down by tom-toms, cannibalism, intellectual deficiency, fetichism [Sic], racial defects, slave-ships, and above all else, above all: “Sho’good eatin’”. On that day, *completely dislocated*, unable to be abroad with the other, the white man, who unmercifully imprisoned me, I took myself far off from my own presence, far indeed, and made myself an *object*. ...all I wanted to was to be a man among other men. (Emphasis added) (*Black Skin, White Masks* 112)

The black person who is excluded and placed in an objectified position strives to escape from his own blackness and becomes eventually invisible, which is expressed by Fanon as follows: “I slip into the corners, I remain silent, I strive for anonymity, for invisibility” (*Black Skin, White Masks* 116). It is also noteworthy that the only solution to liberate the black man from invisibility is to declare his own blackness, rather than trying to get rid of it. Fanon explains his own revolutionary statement by saying that, “since the other hesitated to recognise me, there, there remained only one solution: to make myself known” (*Black Skin, White Masks* 115). Richard Schmitt comments on the objectification of racism and points out that:

Objectification is not turning people into things-that cannot be done-but pretending that they are things and, more importantly, forcing them to accept that pretence, at least in relations to the oppressor. But the pretences must be maintained. They are constantly in danger of being disrupted by reality. Hence the grand objectifications- male superiority, white superiority, Europeanism- are complex continuing projects to maintain certain pretence. This requires many different strategies, suitable for slightly different situations. But all of them are in the service of the same goal, of pretending that members of a certain group are not fully human at all. This is the basic insight of Fanon’s claim that the great variety of racist behaviours are all strategies in continuing the project of falsification, of making people appear to be what they not only are not but cannot be. (39-40)

Having been described as a process of dehumanisation, objectification is only one of the multiplicity of strategies and practices of racism aimed at the subordination of the black people. In addition to objectification, negative stereotyping is the third important manifestation of racism (Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* 113). Considering stereotypes as a part of representation, Homi Bhabha claims that colonial discourse and racism are dependent on “the concept of ‘fixity’ in the ideological construction of otherness” (66). This aspect of fixity of stereotypes establishes a strict form of “rigidity and an unchanging order” in the way that it is impossible for the colonised other to step out of fixed stereotypes (Bhabha 66). All the negative stereotypes which are impossible to erase, such as “the Negro is an animal, the negro is bad, the negro is ugly” are imposed on the black people who are forever seen as savages, brutes and illiterates (Fanon, *Black Skin, White Mask* 113).

Furthermore, Homi Bhabha shows the ambivalence of the fixation, as he perceives the stereotype not as a fact but as a process which is constantly changing and producing a “colonial identity that is played out” (77). Bhabha considers the stereotype as the problematic site of “both fixity and fantasy” in the face of a “threat from the heterogeneity of other positions” (77). He comments on the discursive structure of the stereotypes and states that:

As a form of splitting and multiple belief, the stereotype requires, for its successful signification, a continual and repetitive chain of other stereotypes. The process by which the metaphoric ‘masking’ is inscribed on lack which must then be concealed gives the stereotype both its fixity and its phantasmatic quality- the same old stories of the Negro’s animality, the Coolie’s inscrutability or the stupidity of the Irish must be told (compulsively) again and afresh, and are differently gratifying and terrifying each time. (77)

Hence, the stereotype functions as an alienating power for both parties. The stereotype, as Bhabha claims, works as a mask or a substitute for the colonial subject. In a similar manner, Fanon reveals the subversive nature of stereotypes in displaying the variety of negative stereotypes attached to the blacks; while in some circumstances the black man is seen as childish, in other circumstances he is seen as “animal”, and “absolute evil” (*The Wretched of the Earth* 113). The ambivalence of the stereotypes is seen as the cause of the splitting of identities as Fanon explains: “When people like me, they tell me

it is in spite of my colour. When they dislike me, they point out that it is not because of my colour. Either way, I'm locked into the infernal circle" (*Black Skin, White Mask* 116). Accordingly, the identities which are attributed to the Western self and the black other are never fixed realities, but gradually manufactured and normalised by the stereotypes. Bhabha further states that:

The question of identification is never the affirmation of a pre-given identity never a self-fulfilling prophesy - it is always the production of an 'image' of identity and the transformation of the subject in assuming that image. The demand of identification- that is, to be for an Other - entails the representation of the subject in the differentiating order of Otherness. Identification, as we inferred from the preceding illustrations, is always the return of an image of identity that bears the mark of splitting in the Other place from which it comes.
(45)

Being a representative of "the absolute evil" (Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* 32), the black man is conditioned in the Western world through a racist representation from which there is no escape because of the simple fact that a white man's reasoning and understanding of himself and the black man is dependent on "the fact of belonging to or not belonging to a given race, a given species" (Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* 40). Hence, when Fanon states that, "*wherever he goes, the Negro remains a Negro*", he underlines the fixity and stability of the racist stereotypes attached to the blacks (italics are original) (*Black Skin, White Masks* 173). Seeing black people as savages can be explained as the "articulation of the signifier of 'race' as anything other than its *fixity* as racism" (Bhabha 75).

After investigating the various forms of racism that are the annihilation of native language, objectification of colonised people and negative stereotyping which secures the inferiority of black and coloured races, it is also necessary to analyse the strategies of fighting against racism and anti-racist attempts of the blacks and coloured races, "challenging racist knowledge and practices" (Bonnet 3).

The necessity of a unifying black identity which is an inclusive one, seeking "to include Indians and Coloureds" is perceived as the primary requirement of anti-racist struggles (Adam and Moodley 252). The concept of identity occupies an important place in black

and coloured people's struggle to create "a collective social identity" (Goldberg and Solomos 5), connoting a sense of "belonging, which is both a way of being, of social existence, and a longing" (7).

Identity, on the individual level, as Jacques Lacan ⁶ argues, is constructed during the developmental stages of the child, beginning before birth and continuing with the use of language, which he names as the "Real, Imaginary and Symbolic stages" (37). Lacan defines the imaginary or mirror stage as the manifestation of "the affective dynamism by which the subject originally identifies himself with the usual gestalt of his own body... it represents an ideal unity, a salutary *imago*" (18). Lacan claims that the self constructs his identity through images which occur at the mirror stage, the function of which is to "establish a relation between the organism and its reality" (4). This relation, however, is imaginary as Lacan states; "the human individual fixes upon himself an image that alienates him from himself" (19). The self constructs his identity by making a distinction between his own self and the other. According to Lacan, the child's identifying himself with his image in the mirror gives him a false sense of wholeness while the other is associated with absence and lack (4). It is a process in which the self "extends from a fragmented body-image to a form of its totality" (Lacan 4). Lacan further explains that the pleasure that derives from meeting himself in the mirror is a "manifestation of the narcissistic image", while the confrontation with the other in the mirror stimulates "aggressivity" (307): "It is this image that becomes fixed, the ideal ego... From this point on, the ego is the function of mastery, a play of presence, of bearing (*prestance*), and of constituted rivalry" (307). Chris Weedon comments on the Lacanian theory of identity:

In Lacanian theory, the infant repeatedly identifies with a mirror image and, in the process, misrecognises itself as a whole, unified and autonomous. Lacan suggests that prior to the mirror phase, infants do not have any sense of distinct identity. The Pre-Oedipal stage of development is governed by the experience of the body in fragments, lacking a definite sense unified, embodied self, separate from the world around it. This state is compounded by the lack of control over the satisfaction of needs and desire that will become the motivating force behind language. (13)

It is a stage of identification where the self assumes an image for himself and for the other that are characterised as fixed images working contradictorily to alienate rather than to find a relation between the self and the reality (Lacan 307). It is only “*mésconnaissance*,” as Lacan terms it, which means misrecognition, which characterises the relation between the self and the other (6). Thus, the images that the self assumes for his and the other’s identities is both stereotypical, fixed, and does not have any relation with reality:

In fact, this formal fixation, which introduces a certain rupture of level, a certain discord between man’s organisation and his *Umwelt*, is the very condition that extends indefinitely his world and his power, by giving his objects their instrumental polyvalence and symbolic polyphony, and also their potential as defensive armour. (17)

As can be clearly observed, stereotyping, in Lacan’s terms fixation, prepares the necessary ground for the ego self to extend his power over his subjects. The fixation, which enables the self to have authority over the other, also functions as defensive armour to keep the alienated subject at a distance. A similar argument is also developed by Homi Bhabha who is sceptical about the notion of identity evoking “a sense of autonomy or solitariness ‘as if it stands by itself in the world’ privileging an individuality and a unitariness whose integrity is expressed in a certain richness of agony and anomie” (98). The concept of identity, for Bhabha, emerges “in between disavowal and designation” as a result of “struggle between the epistemological, visual demand for a knowledge of the Other, and its representation in the act of articulation and enunciation” (99). Bhabha states:

Such binary, two-part identities function in a kind of narcissistic reflection of the One in the Other that is confronted in the language of desire by the psychoanalytic process of identification. For identification, identity is never an *a priori*, nor a finished product; it is only ever the problematic process of access to an image of totality. The discursive conditions of this psychic image of identification will be clarified if we think of the perilous perspective of the concept of image itself. For the image –as point of identification- marks the site of an ambivalence. Its representation is always spatially split- it makes *present* something that is *absent*-and temporally deferred. (99-100)

After situating identity in an ambivalent ground, Bhabha emphasises the impossibility of putting the concept of the other at a “fixed phenomenological point, opposed to the

self, that represents a culturally alien consciousness” (100) rather, it must be perceived as the refutation of “a primordial identity” which “introduces the system of differentiation” (100). For a better understanding of the ambivalent nature of identity, it is appropriate to refer to Emile Benveniste who specifically focuses on the role of language in putting self into a subjective position. In order to explain the construction of identities, Benveniste points out that:

consciousness of self is only possible if it is experienced by contrast. I use only I only when I am speaking to someone who will be a *you* in my address. It is this condition of dialogue that is constitutive of *person*, for it implies that reciprocally *I* becomes *you* in the address of the one who in his turn designates himself as *I*. Here we see a principle whose consequences are to spread out in all directions. Language is possible only because each speaker sets himself up as a *subject* by referring to himself as *I* in his discourse. (italics are original) (40-41)

The concept of identity, then, is produced and continually reproduced through a relationship between the subject “I” and the object “you”, and thus inevitably posits the individuals in a subjective position. Through identification, the self puts himself in the position of subject while putting the object in place of the other.

Drawing from the fact that the concept of identity may involve within itself counter-identification against socially imposed identities along with the meanings and values they represent, Stuart Hall claims that identity is not an unproblematic issue as may be thought: “Instead of thinking of identity as an already accomplished fact”, Stuart Hall argues, “we should think, instead, of identity as a ‘production’ which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation” (“Cultural Identity and Diaspora” 392). With the aim of exploring his allegation of the problematic nature of the concept of identity, Hall specifies two different types of cultural identity: collective identity and individual identity. According to the first approach which is the collective identity, cultural identity is a “shared culture, a sort of collective ‘one true self’, hiding inside the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed ‘selves’, which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common” (393). In another article titled “Old and New Identities, Old and New Ethnicities”, Stuart Hall defines collective identity as constructed against racism:

It had to do with the constitution of some defensive collective identity against the practices of racist society. It had to do with the fact that people were being blocked out of and refused an identity and identification within the majority nation, having to find some other roots on which to stand. Because people have to find some ground, some place, some position on which to stand. Blocked out of any access to an English or British identity, people had to try to discover who they were. It is the crucial moment of the rediscovery or the search for roots. (148)

Collective cultural identity, as Stuart Hall explains, aims to create a homogenous, all-encompassing, unified collective identity since identity as a term implies “the process of identification, of saying that this here is the same as that, or we are the same together, in this respect” (“Old and New Identities” 146). Conversely, Hall specifies a second aspect of cultural identity which is different from collective identity. In contrast to the unifying characteristics of collective identity, the second type of cultural identity emphasises difference rather than similarity. There are “critical points of deep and significant *difference* which constitute ‘what we really are’; or rather- since history has intervened- what we have become’ (Italics are original) (“Cultural Identity and Diaspora” 394). According to the second view of cultural identity, identities are not fixed, unchanging, fully-established concepts, but are in a constant state of change:

We cannot speak for very long, with any exactness, about ‘one experience, one identity’, without acknowledging its other side- the ruptures and discontinuities which constitute, precisely, the Caribbean’s ‘uniqueness’. Cultural identity, in this second sense, is a matter of ‘becoming’ as well of ‘being’. It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture. Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But, like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialised past, they are subject to the continuous ‘play’ of history, culture and power. (“Cultural Identity and Diaspora” 394)

Instead of categorising identity into two distinctive groups as Stuart Hall does, it may be more appropriate to perceive identity as a single concept which incorporates two different and conflicting but interrelated elements within itself. On the one hand, it is based upon the principle of identification, similarity and unification of the communities, and on the other hand, it is based on difference and uniqueness of the identity, and having a fluctuating, discontinuous and fluid nature. Hall further combines these two dimensions of identity in his analysis of black racial identity and points out that:

This second view of cultural identity is much less familiar, and more unsettling. If identity does not proceed, in a straight unbroken line, from some fixed origin, how are we to understand its formation? We might think of black Caribbean identities as ‘framed’ by two axes or vectors, simultaneously operative: the vector of similarity and continuity; and the vector of difference and rupture. Caribbean identities always have to be thought in terms of the dialogic relationship between these two axes. The one gives us some grounding in, some continuity with, the past. The second reminds us that what we share is precisely the experience of profound discontinuity. (“Cultural Identity and Diaspora” 395)

In the light of Hall’s argument, it can be asserted that the notion of difference which emphasises the uniqueness of black cultural experience and the notion of similarity which unifies all black people regardless of different origins on the basis of their common experiences of racism in Britain both play a crucial role for black people and their concept of cultural identity.

In addition to Stuart Hall’s understanding of similarity and difference, it may further be argued that the concept of similarity not only includes the similarity or unification between blacks living in Britain, but also the similarity of black people with their new diasporic environment in Britain namely, British people. Drawing on Hall’s own logic of identity that identity is “never static and always subject to discontinuities and ruptures” and is in a constant state of change, it may be claimed that it is almost impossible to have an unchanged, purely preserved Afro-Caribbean black identity both before and after slavery and colonial exploitation, both economic and cultural, and finally postcolonial diasporic experience of blacks in Britain. Hence, despite their struggle to resist against the dominant Western culture, black cultural identity is, on the one hand, constructed according to their present experiences in a new social environment, and on the other hand, is based upon the cultural heritage of Afro-Caribbean roots. In other words, black identity is an amalgamation of the historical consciousness of the Afro-Caribbeans about their past cultural heritage and the present day experiences of immigrants in Britain. Similar to Hall, Paul Gilroy also concentrates on the concept of black cultural identity with a stronger focus on the principle of difference. According to Gilroy, black cultural identity is an outcome of the “dense hybrid, and multiple formations of postcolonial culture” (Gilroy, *Against Race* 77). Gilroy describes black cultural identity as a “double consciousness” (*Against Race* 77),

and argues that the “recognition of sameness and differentiation is a premise of modern political culture” because it is the only way to construct a double consciousness of identity (*Against Race* 101). Gilroy’s notion of double consciousness includes the amalgamation of collective and individual identities at the same time and thus, incorporates the elements of both difference and sameness. In that respect, Gilroy’s concept of identity corresponds to Hall’s concept of identity which requires the negotiation of collective and individual identity.

It may further be argued that identity is constructed through representation which in fact works through stereotypes. Stuart Hall comments on the function of representation in putting the self into subjective position and states:

Identities are, as it were, the positions which the subject is obliged to take up while always ‘knowing’ (the language of consciousness here betrays us) that they are representations, that representation is always constructed across a ‘lack’, across a division, from the place of the Other, and thus can never be adequate – identical - to the subject processes which are invested in them. The notion that an effective suturing of the subject to a subject-position requires, not only that the subject is hailed, but that the subject invests in the positions, means that suturing has to be thought of as an *articulation*, rather than a one-sided process, and that in turn places *identification*, if not identities, firmly on the theoretical agenda. (“Who Needs ‘Identity’?” 19)

In addition to Hall, who claims that identity which is formed through representation is also functional in creating a distancing or a division between the self and the other, Homi Bhabha concentrates on the concept of the identity which is formed through stereotypes and he declares, identity is situated within the “Lacanian schema of the Imaginary”, and is a “false representation of reality” and an “arrested, fixated form of representation” which does not tolerate any possibility of difference outside the stereotypical representation of the subject (75). Bhabha further argues that:

This is the basis of the close relation between the two forms of identification complicit with the Imaginary-narcissism and aggressivity. It is precisely these two forms of identification that constitute the dominant strategy of colonial power exercised in relation to the stereotype which, as a form of multiple and contradictory belief, gives knowledge of difference and simultaneously disavows or masks it. Like the mirror phase ‘the fullness’ of the stereotype - its image as identity - is always threatened by ‘lack’. (77)

The notions of narcissism and aggressivity, which Bhabha borrows from Lacan, are two important concepts stimulating the emergence of stereotypes in the way that the self takes pleasure in identifying with his own image while he takes displeasure in recognising a difference from his own self. Therefore, the completeness and unity of the self give him a narcissistic image, while his difference from the other provokes aggressivity.

Relying on Lacan, Bhabha, Hall and Gilroy's ideas on the concept of identity which is constructed through representation, and the self's identifying himself with an image which does not reflect the realities, it can be argued that identity can never be imposed from outside and be fixed eternally, instead it is in a constant process of change and modification. Within the context of black identity struggle, black people are capable of constructing their own distinctive and unique cultural identity which is based upon difference, rather than trying to fit into fixed definition of identity pushing them into perpetual state of inferiority. For the first time, black and coloured people decided to represent themselves through an identity which is constructed by them.

The incarnation of black culture against the assumption of the lack of cultures of the Negroes as proclaimed by the Western culture gradually led to the production of a literature reinforcing the exaltation of blackness and its difference and turned into a provocateur of black people to fight against the cultural obliteration and negation of their identity. As Fanon argues, the literature produced by black people:

... may be properly called a literature of combat, in the sense that it calls for the whole people to fight for their existence as a nation. It is a literature of a combat, because it moulds the national consciousness, giving it form and contours and flinging open before it new and boundless horizons; it is a literature of combat because it assumes responsibility, and because it is the will to liberty expressed in terms of time and space. (*The Wretched of the Earth* 193)

Drawing its material from African cultural elements and adopting it into black and coloured diasporic experience in Britain, this revolutionary literature tries to re-define what it means to be black and coloured by amalgamating the experiences of slavery in the past and experiences of immigrants in contemporary Britain. The claim to a national culture in the past not only undermines the stereotype of the savagery of black people,

but also serves as a justification for the construction of future black British culture founded on the authentic Afro-Caribbean cultural elements which are accommodated within contemporary British experiences of black people (Niven 294).

Appropriating the position of the racially oppressed and exploited people, the young generation of contemporary black British poets, among whom are Linton Kwesi Johnson, David Dabydeen and Fred D'Aguiar as outstanding poets in contemporary British poetry, give voice to the experiences of black and coloured immigrants living in Britain and call attention to their problems of discrimination, recognition, racism and identity. These three poets are specifically chosen for this study for two basic reasons. The first reason is the differing approaches of these three poets to the problem of racism. While David Dabydeen focuses on colonial racism, Linton Kwesi Johnson focuses on contemporary racism. Fred D'Aguiar, on the other hand, concentrates on both forms of racism. The other reason is that although each of the poets tries to show a different aspect of racism, they have a common approach to the solution of the problem of racism, that is, the necessity of constructing a distinctive Afro-Caribbean cultural identity. Committing themselves to the re-definition of black and coloured identity and the exploration of marginalised life of inner-cities inhabited mostly by black and coloured immigrants, black poets paved the way for the composition of a new type of poetry, that is, Black British Poetry, a poetry that is created by black and coloured immigrants living in Britain with the aim of giving voice to the silenced people of marginalised groups (Niven 293). Black British Poetry gained popularity and widespread recognition with its emphasis on asserting black cultural identity. Having emerged out of a struggle to find new models, positions and roles for the black presence in Britain, black British poetry is concerned with defining national identity and exploring racial oppression. As the second generation of black British poets, Linton Kwesi Johnson, David Dabydeen and Fred D'Aguiar introduced revolutionary changes to black British writing with their concentration on racism as the most important social, cultural and political issue.

By transforming their common social memory and past experiences to the present through the re-enactment of cultural forms embodied in rituals, Linton Kwesi Johnson,

David Dabydeen and Fred D'Aguiar undermine the false ideology of blackness. It is not the only aim of these three poets to embellish their poetry with black cultural elements and conveying black history, but they also deal with manifestations of racism in contemporary Britain as well as in the past. The fight against racism in their poetry operates on different levels; hatred and violence against the blacks which lead to the construction of stereotypes and discrimination on the one hand, and the negation and the obliteration of culture, religion, and language, on the other hand. These poets express the necessity of a unitary black culture as an essential element of connecting black and coloured people. These three poets define themselves in a combination of resistance and negotiation, writing within Britain against Britain.

Consequently, the poetry of Linton Kwesi Johnson and David Dabydeen and Fred D'Aguiar subversively illustrates manifestations of racism with the aim of demonstrating how racism is ideologically constructed to legitimise the colonial oppression and slavery, by combining the struggle against racial oppression with the struggle for national identity. Therefore, they are preoccupied with the reconstruction of a distinctive black national identity and the historical rootedness of their own African culture which are vividly brought into the foreground in their poetry. While different manifestations of racism in the poetry of these three poets are illustrated in Chapter I, the attempts of these poets to define a distinctive black cultural identity and fight against racism are explored in Chapter II. In the Conclusion of this dissertation, it is asserted that the poetry of Linton Kwesi Johnson and David Dabydeen and Fred D'Aguiar brings out a proposition that the only medium to fight against racism is to perpetually re-enforce the existence of black cultural identity through poetry.

CHAPTER I

Manifestation of Racism in the Poetry of Linton Kwesi Johnson, David Dabydeen and Fred D'Aguiar

Before analysing the manifestation of the problem of racism along with the social and political conflicts allied with it in the poetry of Linton Kwesi Johnson, (1952-), David Dabydeen (1955-) and Fred D'Aguiar (1960-), it is necessary to specify each poet's differing standpoints on the same problem. From this perspective, David Dabydeen, beginning with his first volume of poetry (1984), is preoccupied with the 19th century colonial times, and the social and cultural life of the slaves, presenting a critical analysis of the relationship between the slave and the master (Ward 52). He explores the historical roots of the problem of racism by associating it with slavery. In the same manner, Linton Kwesi Johnson puts forward challenging arguments with his assertions that British politics and its culture are still heavily constituted by colonial policies and racist ideology (Dawson 60). Unlike Dabydeen, Johnson does not especially deal with the colonial times and the lives of the slaves. On the contrary, his primary focus is on the present day situation of black and coloured people living in Britain where racism continues to occupy the minds of the English people as well as governmental policy. Instead of writing his poems on the slave and master relationship, he prefers to display the conflicts between the black youths and the British police force. He demonstrates that black people in Britain are still in an inferior position and are exposed to racism at almost every stage of their daily lives. Like Dabydeen, Johnson believes in the necessity of a unified black and coloured history on which a new black cultural heritage can be constructed so that racism can be overcome with a solidarity formed among black people. Compared to Johnson's intensely political criticism with its militant and aggressive tone clearly perceived in his poetry, Fred D'Aguiar's exploration of racism is, to a great extent, different from Dabydeen and Johnson's. Unlike Johnson and Dabydeen who continuously deal with the problems of discrimination, alienation and racism that black people face in the United Kingdom, Fred D'Aguiar does not dedicate all of his poems to the exploration of the problems of discrimination, alienation and

racism. He also writes personal poems dealing with love and nostalgia for the past without totally committing himself to social and political issues. Instead of directly attacking the British political system and its racist policies, D'Aguiar inclines to concentrate upon the cultural alienation and psychological isolation of the black people in a completely foreign society, and their feelings of exile in a different society together with their desire to return to their black African roots. With the exception of a few of his poems in which the poet directly addresses the problem of racism (Niven 308), D'Aguiar's major preoccupation is the investigation of black cultural traditions by giving an account of his own childhood memories. He focuses on the image of his grandmother, reflecting the everyday life of black African peasants in Guyana. When the poet deals with the issue of racism in these poems, he occasionally gives voice to the sufferings of the slaves in the past, and the psychological torture of the black immigrants in Britain. Furthermore, D'Aguiar does not abstain from depicting the violence and confrontation between the British police and the black public. Though not as aggressive as Linton Kwesi Johnson, D'Aguiar's way of handling the issue of racism is much more subdued, humorous and witty at the same time.

Taking into account the differing approaches to racism in the poetry of these three poets, it is not surprising to observe different types of racisms manifested in the poetry of each poet. Considering racism as an ambivalent term whose meaning changes constantly, Alcoff incorporates a contextualist approach to racism and claims that contextualism can best demonstrate the "devastating reality of race" (270). Alcoff defines two types of contextualist approach: objectivist and subjectivist. While the objectivist approach brings forth "a definition of race general enough to be applicable across a variety of contexts" (Alcoff 270), the subjectivist approach is defined as the everyday experience of racial discrimination. Alcoff further argues:

However, objectivist approaches to race that chart its impact in the public domain sometimes hinder an appreciation for the everydayness of racial experience. Objectivist approaches that define race by invoking metanarratives of historical experience, cultural traditions, or processes of colonisation and that take a third-person perspective can be inattentive to the micro-interactions in which racialisation operates, is reproduced and sometimes resingified. In contrast, subjectivist approaches which begin from the lived experience of racialisation can reveal how race is constitutive of bodily experience, subjectivity, judgement, and epistemic relationships. Such descriptions can then

justify the claim that one's designated race is constitutive element of fundamental, everyday embodied existence and social interaction. (271)

It may be claimed that Johnson, Dabydeen and D'Aguiar present a subjectivist approach to racism, committing themselves to portrayal of the everyday experience of black people rather than giving a general objectivist approach to the issue of racism. Each of the poets brings forth a different dimension to the discussion of racism and, in this way, deploys multiple perspectives of racism. Within a broader perspective of the approaches to the issue of racism developed by each poet, it may be necessary to categorise types of racism manifested in the poetry of each poet.

First, colonial racism is observed to be the most important preoccupation of Dabydeen who endeavours to show that racism stands as a legitimising pretext for the economic and cultural exploitation of the slave population in the plantation society of the 19th century Guyana. The poet displays how racism is institutionalised within the system of slavery and plantation. Second, contemporary racism which black people encounter in their everyday experiences seems to be the primary concern of Linton Kwesi Johnson, who openly declares war against contemporary racism disguised in a constantly changing shape in everyday life.

What is clearly observed in the light of this categorisation is that colonialism and racism are closely intermingled. As Cheboksarov argues, the concept that people can be separated by their natural inequalities and biological differences emerges as a "pretext for the ruthless exploitation" of the indigenous people under slavery in colonial societies and to justify social distinctions (347). In addition to being founded on a scientific premise that there are superior and inferior races according to the physical and psychological differences between human races, racism becomes a major motivation and ideological justification as well as a political instrument for the repressive practices of colonialism (Cheboksarov 347).

The ideological approach to racial representations is reminiscent of the French Marxist philosopher Louis Althusser, who theorises how ideological practises are institutionalised within state apparatuses. Ideology is defined by Louis Althusser as the

“imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence” (21). Althusser asserts that ideologies “ensure the absolute guarantee that everything really is so, and that on condition that the subjects recognise what they are and behave accordingly” (32). Although they have no relation with the actual condition of events, ideologies create a kind of false-consciousness in the individual in the way:

...the ideological representation of ideology is itself forced to recognize that every ‘subject’ endowed with a ‘consciousness’ and believing in the ‘ideas’ that his ‘consciousness’ inspires in him and freely accepts, must ‘act according to his ideas’, must therefore inscribe his own ideas as a free subject in the actions of his material practice. If he does not do so, ‘that is wicked’. (Althusser 24)

Individuals who have acquired consciousness, which will be necessary to transform their idea into action, gradually learn to live in accordance with their ideas. In this regard, the individual will think that he is embedded with consciousness which is formed by his free will, and shaped by his ideas and beliefs. Quite contradictorily, Althusser further argues that ideologies which are formed by ideas, do not have an ideal or spiritual existence as it is assumed, but a material existence. The consciousness that Althusser perceives necessary for ideas to be turned into ideology is constructed within the institutions of the state which he calls “Ideological State Apparatuses” (10). He lists these as the religious, educational, family, political, legal and cultural state apparatuses (10).

With the aim of providing a broader dimension to his argument about the functioning of ideologies, Althusser contrasts Ideological State Apparatuses with Repressive State Apparatuses, the fundamental difference between which is that while the Repressive State Apparatuses function “by violence”, the Ideological State Apparatuses function “by ideology” (11). Thus, repression and oppression through violence are the essential characteristic of Repressive State Apparatuses, and ideological justification through institutions is the most important aspect of Ideological State Apparatuses. In other words, an individual’s conception of the outside world is shaped by institutions, beginning with the family and continuing through education, church, and political and cultural institutions. In this manner, the risk of the individual’s questioning the ideology

is reduced to a minimum, since the ideas are naturalised within the institutions and presented to people as the truth:

If the ISAs 'function' massively and predominantly by ideology, what unifies their diversity is precisely this functioning, insofar as the ideology by which they function is always in fact unified, despite its diversity and its contradictions, beneath the ruling ideology, which is the ideology of 'the ruling class'. Given the fact that the 'ruling class' in principle holds State power (openly or more often by means of alliances between classes or class factions), and therefore has at its disposal the (Repressive) State Apparatus, we can accept the fact that this same ruling class is active in the Ideological State Apparatuses insofar as it is ultimately the ruling ideology which is realized in the Ideological State Apparatuses, precisely in its contradictions. Of course, it is a quite different thing to act by laws and decrees in the (Repressive) State Apparatus and to 'act' through the intermediary of the ruling ideology in the Ideological State Apparatuses. (Althusser 12)

When the exploitative and oppressive function of colonialism is taken into consideration, it can be stated that colonialism has been the most important Ideological State Apparatus to produce domination, globalisation and internationalisation of the ideology of racial representations. Subsequently, it is necessary to introduce the term institutional racism which helps to demonstrate the fact that racial ideology and the concept of race are constructed within state institutions. Hence, before analysing the ideology of racism or individual prejudices, it is necessary to examine the underlying reasons for the construction of racial ideology. In his unravelling of the role of personal prejudice in the exploitation of black people, Healey draws attention to the fact that:

The colonists did not enslave black indentured servants because they were prejudiced or because they disliked blacks or thought them inferior... the decision to enslave black Africans was an attempt to resolve a labour supply problem. The primary roles of prejudice and racism in the creation of a minority group status are to rationalise and 'explain' the emerging system of racial and ethnic advantage. Prejudice and racism help to mobilise support for the creation of minority group status and to stabilise the system as it emerges. Prejudice and racism can provide convenient and convincing justifications for exploitation. (61-62)

Accordingly, institutional racism works as an instrument to normalise the exploitation of blacks to provide the labour supply of the plantation societies. Institutional racism, as Helen Davis argues, "acknowledges the extent to which organisations are, in spite of

their equal opportunities policies, governed by the same racist attitudes that pervade the entire society within which they function” (167).

In other words, institutional racism evokes the idea that racism as an instrument of discrimination manifests itself at every level of social, political and legal institutions of the society and eventually is naturalised by becoming an integral part of everyday life and popular culture. Hence, the concept of race is manipulated by dominant groups for the purposes of legitimising the ideology of racism and furthering their own systems of exploitation in state institutions. As Philip Cohen states:

The concept of racism as a false consciousness can be regarded as a correlate of prejudice, and stereotyping... To understand where the police are coming from we should look at the changing role which the institutions and practise of law have played in racialising the place occupied by immigrant populations within the urban social structure, as well as the internal contradictions of the apparatus of enforcement itself. (87)

Within the frame of ideological debates about racism and its institutionalisation in state apparatuses, slavery can be considered as the most important long standing social institution which gave rise to the policies of discrimination, and principles of social, economic and cultural classificatory systems among the people in plantation society, and further the implementation of the scientific and biological concepts of racism according to which there are “natural, discreet and fixed subdivisions of the human species” (Miles, *Racism* 344). The ideology of slavery fosters the idea of existence of biological differences between human beings as well as the biological hierarchy of fundamentally different groups of people. For this reason one may argue that the biological conception of racism is an ideologically constructed phenomenon which depends on the evolution of hegemonic power structures to legitimate exploitation, racial oppression and subordination. Similarly, as stated above, racist ideology of blackness is socially and politically constructed as a “consequence of certain symbolic and ideological structure” (Hall, “Old and New Identities” 149).

Considering the problem of race as a function of European political and economic expansionism, the Caribbean islands which “constitute the oldest colonial sphere of Western European overseas expansion”, is a place where the racialist practice was most

explicitly experienced (Horowitz 2). The Caribbean islands depended on slavery as a source of plantation labour which was an agricultural system established for the purpose of producing commodities like sugar, cotton, coffee and tobacco (Moore 51). African blacks were the main source of the slave-based system of plantations. With the growth of the plantations, the solution to the labour shortage was the importation of indentured workers from India, China and Africa. During the 19th century, over 135,000 Chinese and nearly 500,000 Indians were brought into Dutch Guiana (Surinam), British Guiana, Trinidad, Cuba and Jamaica (Mintz 31). Apart from its being an agricultural system, the plantations in the Caribbean islands gave way to the creation of a social and political structure where the majority of slaves and indentured workers were controlled by a small minority of Europeans. From a socio-political perspective, the paramount feature of the plantation system was the formation of a “class-caste system” which was based on racial differences (Beckford 67). The racial difference, which was a controlling influence in the caste system also drew a strict dividing line between the masters as the ruling class consisting of the white Europeans and the subordinate class of slaves consisting of the blacks, the coloureds and Asians. In view of the fact that race was the most important criterion in determining the social position of people within the hierarchy of the plantation system, the black and coloured people were located at the bottom of the caste hierarchy as slaves while the white Europeans were situated at the top. Hence, it would not be a mistake to conceive plantation system as a socio-economic as well as a political system which aimed at the subjugation of the majority of the population. Significantly, racism functions as the most important instrument in providing the maintenance and permanency of the political hegemony of “plantocracy” in the Caribbean islands (Moore 66). Depicted as a “system of land exploitation” by Mintz, the plantation system in the 19th century was an efficient way of continuing capitalist production (22). In order to justify the social and economic enslavement of Africans from a legal and moral point of view, it became necessary to create a racist ideology according to which the Africans were interpellated as subjects who were deprived of political and civil rights.

David Dabydeen, who is a Caribbean born poet living in Britain, deals recurrently in his poems, with the issues of “slavery, cultural denigration, migration, dislocation and

psychic division” (Grant 10). Born in a “logie” which is a house of one room for sugar workers in Guyana in 1955 (Mair 2), as a descendant of coolies, it is not a coincidence that the poet is preoccupied with slavery and presents such vivid and lively depictions of plantation life. The sugar plantations of Guyana, and the experiences of the slaves in the 19th century and the indentured workers are the major concerns of David Dabydeen in his book *Slave Song* (1984) in which all the poems are written in Creole, accompanied with standard English versions. “Slave Song” the title poem of the collection, deals with the frustration of a black slave who feels trapped in the blackness of his skin colour and with his struggle to escape from the “biologisation” of his socially and politically constructed subordination (Gilroy, “Urban Social Movements, ‘Race’, and Community” 407). The slave persona in the poem, addresses his master and challenges him in his imagination:

Tie me haan up.⁷
 Juk out me eye.
 Haal me teet out
 So me na go bite.
 Put chain rung me neck.
 Lash me foot tight.
 Set yu daag fo gyaad
 Maan till nite.
 (Dabydeen “Slave Song” ll. 1-8)

Tie my hands up
 Pierce my eyes
 Haul my teeth out
 So I’ll not bite.
 Put chains around my neck
 Lash my feet tight
 Set your dogs to guard
 Morning till night.
 (Dabydeen “Slave Song” 50)

The physical violence applied to the slave, described in detail in these lines, sheds light on the relationship between the slave and the master. The physical punishment is seen as necessary to maintain discipline in plantation slavery. Hence, the poem clearly shows how the slave system is nurtured and sustained through violence in the form of physical assault on slaves. However, the slave who is exposed to violence does not feel disadvantaged or victimised; on the contrary, he feels powerful enough to confront his

master. The systematic exploitation of the slave gains racist overtones in the following lines of the same poem:

Whip me till me bleed
 Till beg.
 Tell me how hanimal
 African orang-utan
 Tell me how me cannibal
 Fit fo slata fit fo hang.
 Slice waan lip out
 Waan ear an waan leg.
 (Dabydeen, "Slave Song" ll. 1-18)

Whip me till I bleed
 Till I beg.
 Tell me I'm an animal
 An African orang-utan
 Tell me I'm a cannibal
 Fit only for slaughter or hanging
 Slice one lip out
 One ear and one leg.
 (Dabydeen, "Slave Song" 50)

The slave, in this poem, is not only beaten by his master, but also, exposed to verbal violence to impose on him the notion of his being racially inferior. The slave, who never loses his pride, courageously confronts his master by not showing any sign of fear or pain of whipping and mutilation, and thus, showing resistance against his master.

Stating that "racialised structures are the institutional pillars of society" Stephan Small draws attention to two components of racialised structures (50); the first refers to the distribution of resources such as political power, employment, education and housing, and the second refers to "the normal, recurrent and routinised procedures of institutions that shape and constrain our daily lives" (50). In the case of the "Slave Song", the master who holds the political power in his hand uses that power to exploit the underprivileged people in different spheres of social life. The poem quite clearly displays racism as institutionalised within the plantation system and used as a political instrument to rationalise the practises of dominant power. Furthermore, the idea of race in this poem is dependent on the view that race is a biologically determined fact according to which blacks are inferior to the whites. As stated by Young, the notion of "atavism", the belief that the Africans and their descendents represent the earliest stages

of human development is recurrently emphasised in this poem (268). The names that the slave is called, that is, “animal”, “orang-utan”, and “cannibal”, can be taken as evidence which show the integral relationship between race and slavery. Gerard Pierre Charles comments on this relationship and states:

Slavery was the most shameful and brutal expression of man’s exploitation by man, a form of labour organisation resuscitated from the mists of time and made to serve the accumulation of capital by expanding capitalism, a form of oppression of one race by another, designed to reduce the black man to a purely animal status, to bring about his psychological annihilation, and his cultural alienation. This historical practice left its stigma on the whole area of social relations between Blacks and Whites in every meeting-place of these population groups. (71)

Describing slavery as a form of labour organisation, Pierre-Charles underlines its basic principle, that is, exploitation through racism to contribute to the continuation of capitalism. Therefore, looking behind racial oppression, it is possible to perceive the covert economic exploitation that goes parallel with ideas of racial superiority and inferiority. Racism which assumes a scientific guise by claiming to be rational, moral and objective is also related to “the economies of colonialism” and “industrial growth” (Guillaumin 37). In this respect, racism proves itself to be a false ideology serving economic exploitation. Furthermore, this exploitation is pursued without discriminating between men and women.

The analysis of the master and slave relationship in slavery is highlighted by Dabydeen in “Dependence, or the Ballad of the Little Black Boy” in the *Coolie Odyssey*. Unlike the other slave poems which give an account of the life of field-workers, “Dependence, or the Ballad of the Little Black Boy” is a poem which illustrates the life of domestic-servants. The poem is written from the perspective of a black boy who is a domestic servant in a house where the whole family comes together on a special occasion, that is, the drawing of a family picture. The poem gains humorous overtones when it is narrated through the viewpoint of a little black boy:

Painterman come one day to our house
 Whilst Missie try out her expensive blouse
 And Massa make me cut his toenail
 And muse aloud how nigger like snail

I rush fetch his trousers shoe and hair brush.
 (Dabydeen, "Dependence, or the Ballad of the Little Black Boy" ll. 1-5)

There is a hustle and bustle in the house since people are rushing everywhere to get prepared for the painting of the family picture. While the masters are trying on their best clothes, the slaves are hurrying to help them in their preparation. The boy does not refrain from giving voice to the racially overloaded thoughts of the master who keeps on humiliating the slave boy running around to bring the master's clothes. The poem presents a snapshot taken from the scene of the everyday life of master and slave. It is a reflection of racial inequality in the social structure of societies which are based upon slavery as a social and political system. The boy's observation of the behaviour of the people around him causes the slave boy to come to a conclusion which is expressed in the following lines:

Lastly Miss Harriet and her pet dog
 Whom she takes to her bed and takes to her bog
 Serves him choicest meat on the rich china plate-
 Never mind the beggars waiting at the gate-
 In my next life god please don't make me black
 I want to be an English dog when I come back.
 (Dabydeen, "Dependence, or the Ballad of the Little Black Boy" ll. 19-24)

The comparison of the black slaves and the pet dog of the lady in terms of masters' treatment leads the slave boy to draw a simple but logical conclusion that dogs are more valued than the blacks. The boy's simple observation of the events happening around him brings to the surface the racially embedded Western ideology according to which the Africans are "labelled as savages, barbarians and primitives" by asserting the idea that "Africa had no history, her history having begun with her 'discovery'" (Ernst 458). The poem explicitly shows the position of black people as racially othered. The poem closes with a last indication of the location of the boy in the picture, and the determination of the pose that he should take, "they move me here, there, then finally agree / that whole day long I must stoop on one knee" (Dabydeen, "Dependence, or the Ballad of the Little Black Boy" ll. 28-29). In other words, the pose that the boy in this picture as in life assumes is the position of servitude; it is symbolic of the subjugation of the slaves.

As the poem, “Dependence, or the Ballad of the Little Black Boy” clearly shows, life is difficult not only for the black field workers but also for the domestic servants who are exposed to the same kind of humiliation and degradation by their masters. The life in fields is shown to be much more unbearable, difficult and life-consuming than in the houses. This is demonstrated in some other poems in *Slave Song* such as “The Canecutters’ Song” which gives voice to a sugar cane worker who finds himself in a dream of sexual fantasy about a white woman in order to escape from the reality of harsh working conditions. “Love Song”, in a similar manner, lucidly reflects the reality of field work with fragmented lines:

All
 day
 sun
 bun
 tongue
 bun
 all
 day
 throat
 cut
 haat
 hut.
 Wuk na dun, na dun, na dun.
 (Dabydeen, “The Canecutters’ Song” ll. 8-19)

All
 day
 sun
 burns
 tongue
 burns
 all
 day
 throat
 cut
 heart
 hurt.
 Work’s never done, never done, never done.
 (Dabydeen, “The Canecutters’ Song” 52)

It can be observed that the persona is completely fed up with the never ending work in the cane fields under the burning sun. The physical structure of the poem is quite significant not only in creating the mood but also in reflecting the psychology of the

slave persona. The monotony of the never ending field work together with disrupted psychology of sugar cane workers are reflected vividly through the structure of the poem. Almost all of the lines of the poem consist of broken words which give the sense of chopping sugar canes. Although the words are structurally broken from each other, they are contextually connected with each other, and in this manner, each line gains its meaning when it is connected to the following line. The internal connection of these broken lines also reflects the vicious circle of life that the slaves find themselves in, that is, the life of slaves circulated around doing the same thing which is working in the fields. The sharp cutting of the canes is also reflected in the poem with abrupt breaks between the words and the rhythmic pattern of the words like “throat”, “cut”, “heart”, “hurt” and “work”. Additionally, the poem “Elegy”, included in the same volume, is a lament of an old cane worker who has been broken down both psychologically and physically, and has lately discovered that all his life has been wasted in the cane fields. The poem is an elegy for the loss of his youth.

The terrible working conditions in the cane fields are not limited only to male slaves whose whole lives are spent cutting cane in the fields, but also the lives of female workers are reflected vividly. In the introduction to *Slave Song*, Dabydeen comments on the labour division between men and women slaves and points out:

The canecutter, naked to the waist in the tropical heat, chops away all day with his cutlass and towards sunset he separates the cane he has cut down into bundles and takes these to be weighed and then dumped into the punts. Each bundle might weigh up to 100 pounds and he walks to and fro fetching his cane to the punts which might be a quarter of a mile away. He may have to make as many as ten trips to convey all the bundles. It's not a pleasant evening's walk. If the men were involved in one part of the field chopping down cane, the women may be planting and manuring it in another. The women were also employed in clearing trenches, fetching bagasse, weeding fields, and other such tasks. Their experience of the plantation field was as brutal as that of men. (Dabydeen, Introduction 12)

“Song of the Creole Gang Women”, in *Slave Song*, depicts the everyday lives of slave women whose living conditions are not better than that of males. The poem is written in the form of a dialogue. The slave women who work in the sugar cane fields under hard working conditions are talking to each other about their daily lives. The poem begins with the complaint of the slave women about hard work:

1st Woman:

Wuk, nuttin bu wuk
 Maan noon an night nuttin bu wuk
 Booker own me patacake
 Booker own me pickni.
 Pain, nuttin nu pain
 Waan million tous'ne acre cane
 O since me baan_ juk ! juk! juk! juk! juk!
 So sun in me eye like taan.
 (Dabydeen, "Song of the Creole Gang Women" ll.1-8)

Work nothing but work
 Morning noon and night nothing but work
 Booker owns my cunt
 Booker owns my children
 Pain, nothing but pain
 One million thousand acres cane
 O since I was born_ stab! stab! stab! stab! stab!
 So sun in my eye like thorn.
 (Dabydeen, "Song of the Creole Gang Women" 39)

The persona in the poem explicitly brings forth two aspects of slavery; economic exploitation and sexual exploitation. The slave woman gives a brief sketch of her life which consists of hard work that is explained with the lines "Wuk, nuttin bu wuk / Maan noon an night nuttin bu wuk" (1-2), "Work, nothing but work/ Morning noon and night nothing but work" (39). The repetition of the words "work, pain, own and stab" in this poem is significant in underlining the feelings of slave women who feel despair and hopelessness. The life of slave women is summarised by a few words which are repeated throughout the poem; the routine of the field work, the pain of the hard working conditions and being possessed by the plantation owner. For the maintaining of the plantation system, it is necessary for the planters to make unlimited use of labour power provided by slaves. Hence, it is a natural outcome of the plantation system that the slave is perceived as property. In this regard, the slave woman in the poem gives expression to the menacing impact of the slave laws over the lives of the slaves. Duncan Rice draws attention to the written laws of the British colonies which legitimised the absolute power of the master over his slave:

The slave never had the legal protection for whatever little property he might amass, or even redress if his family bonds should be broken by the action of his master. His children, too, were inevitably placed within the slave status by the

conformation that the slave offspring followed the condition of the mother... During the life of slavery, no attempts were made to put limits on the number of hours per day which the slave could be forced to labour in the fields. In fact, the slaves of the English islands suffered as much for areas where the law was silent about the planter's rights as they did from the positive legislation which tried to define their relationship with him. (76-77)

As the system of dependency of the slave on his master developed, the slaves who were deprived of all their political and legal rights continued to be exploited by the colonial, economic and social forces which are inherent in imperialism. Furthermore, the concept of the black race as an inferior race was the most important ideological factor which provided the justification for the sustaining of this system that was based on oppression. The most explicit example of this justification is "An Act for the Governing of the Negroes" that was passed in the 17th century, which states that a separate black law is necessary since "Negroes and other slaves brought unto the People of this island... are barbarous, wild and savage Natures" (Rice 68). Furthermore, the pain that the slave woman mentions in the poem is not only derived from the hard working conditions, but also from being sexually exploited. The economic exploitation in the system of slavery works in a way that the agricultural commodity production is dependent on the slaves who themselves are purchased by contract, and thus, the slaves are also commodified within the system of slavery. In the economic system of domination, racism becomes an ideological force which constructs an image of black slaves as most suited to providing the labour force within the agricultural system of production. The integral relationship between racism and economic exploitation is explained as follows:

Colonialism, racialism, and racist ideology are the products and component parts of the capitalist system. It is true that pre-capitalist class societies already combined the exploitation of populations with the conquest of foreign lands and with the subjugation and exploitation of others, while the exploiting and ruling classes aimed at making their position of dominance into something natural and eternal. But it was only with the advent of capitalism that a society was born in which the continuing expansion of its underlying mode of production, at every stage of its development, was dialectically linked to the steadily increasing oppression and exploitation of other countries and populations. (Ernst 454)

Similarly, the economic exploitation of the slaves can be seen as a part of the process of racialisation through institutional arrangements accompanying it. Within the racialised social and economic system of slavery, the slave women were thought to be more

profitable because they were cheaper than male slaves (Walvin 100). Apart from the hard work that was expected from the slave women, they were also perceived as the producers of future generations of slaves. Being treated both as a labourer and a reproductive agent for their owners, the slave women were exposed to multiple oppression by way of the sexual assaults of planters. The woman in the poem is presented as a powerless victim of slavery. She expresses her pain by saying that: “Booker owns my cunt /Booker owns my children” (Dabydeen, “Song of the Creole Gang Women” ll. 3-4). In this regard, the slave woman is not only expected to work in the fields, but also to serve the sexual demands of her owner. This form of exploitation is more dehumanising and humiliating than the exploitation of labour force. In this respect, Dabydeen’s poem shows the double subjugation of slave women who are both exposed to sexual violence and physical violence. Feelings of humiliation are expressed by the second slave woman as follows:

Chorus:

Dosay an mittae, dosay an mittae,
Booker put e mout on me like pirae.

2nd Woman:

Kiss-kiss-kidee! Kiss-kiss-kiss-kideee !
So wind a howl from de haat o bush
Like bird mesh, tear up on twig.
Hear, hear how e’ya cry, cry, how e’ya bleed on de air,
An bruk up over bud aweh hooman, sickle in haan,
Sweep an sway all day to e saang
Babee strap like burden to we back
Kiss-kiss-kidee! Kiss-kiss-kiss-kideee!
(Dabydeen, “Song of the Creole Gang Women” ll. 14-23)

Chorus:

Dosay and mittae, dosay and mittae
Booker puts his mouth on me like piranha.

2nd Woman:

Kiss-kiss-kidee
Kiss-kiss-kiss-kideeee!
So wind howls from the heart of bush
Like a bird meshed, torn upon twigs,
Hear how it cries, cries, how it bleeds on the air

And broken over buds we women, sickles in hand
 Sweep and sway all day to its song
 Babies strapped like burdens to our backs
 Kiss-kiss-kiss-kideee!
 (Dabydeen, "Song of the Creole Gang Women" 39)

Through a number of images given in these lines, slave women are presented as powerless victims of the system of slavery. "Dosay and mittae" are explained by the poet "as sweet foods made from sugar cane" (Dabydeen, *Slave Song* 38). In order to convey the sinister atmosphere in the fields where the women slaves work, the poet uses alliteration, the repetition of some words like kiss and cry and the repetition of sounds of "k" in line 16, "c" in line 20, "s" in line 22, reflect the sinister atmosphere that women feel in the air. The slave women, working in the sugar cane fields, go to the riverside to wash their bodies and clothes which smell of cane. Piranhas live in these rivers. The image that is created in these lines is that the masters are like piranhas that are attracted by the sugar cane aroma of the slave women's bodies. Resembling the horrifying experience of being eaten by piranhas to the sexual harassment by the slave owners explains the psychological trauma of the rape of the slave women. There is striking food imagery in this poem where the bodies of women are considered as food by the slave owners. The conception of the slave women as a consumer good to satisfy the appetites of the plantation owners evokes not a pleasurable experience of eating but fierce and violent experience of consuming and destroying female body. In a similar manner, the repetition of the word "kiss" which is usually an expression of love and emotion turns out to be an expression of internalised screams of the slave women and the violence of rape within the context of the poem. Hence, the poet brings the words like kiss and food out of their context and use them in a completely different contexts, and in this way achieves to construct striking images in his poem.

Accordingly, a vivid picture of slave women is created in line 38, where women under the heat of the sun had to cut sugar canes, with their babies fastened to their backs. It may even be implied that they conceive their babies as burdens especially when the systematic functioning of childbirth for the permanence of the slave system is taken into consideration. Instead of transporting slaves from Africa, to make the slaves give birth to new slaves could be less costly on the part of the slave owner. Especially, as Bush

states, the threat of the abolition of the slave trade forced the planters to take precautions because without the continuous replenishment from Africa the number of their slaves would fall considerably (121). In this respect, plantation owners force slaves to have as many children as possible to provide the necessary labour supply. Since the number of children born to the slaves gains importance, gradually, women slaves are considered profitable not only because of their lower costs but also because of their reproductive capacities. They are in a sense viewed as a livestock not human beings. As Bush states:

Slave women in Caribbean slave society were influenced not only by traditional patriarchal structures but by white patriarchal intervention in both their productive and reproductive functions. This deeply affected their attitudes to childbirth and arguably led to conscious control over their own reproductive capacities. In refusing to 'breed' as well as labour, women were voicing a strong protest against the system of slavery. (150)

In this regard it is quite natural for slave women to perceive of their babies as burdens. Considering childbirth as a stimulator of natural population increase among slaves, and thus, a perpetuator of the system of plantation, the slave women, in search of the ways of subverting the system of plantation which they are forced to serve, are drained of the feeling of motherhood. Rejecting motherhood presents itself as the only way for slave women, who conceive themselves as trapped in the plantation system, to undermine the system of plantation which brings multiple oppression for slave women.

The second woman repeatedly complains about the harshness of natural conditions. Although the wind may not be harsh, the working conditions definitely are. The song of the bush created by the blowing of the wind gives women an impression of howling, crying and bleeding. The repetition of the words "Kiss-kiss-kidee" is the voice of the tropical tyrant-bird, Kiskadee which is "named after its shrill call 'Kiss-kiss-kidee', 'kiss, kiss, kiss, kidee'" (Dabydeen, *Slave Song* 38). The feeling of the harsh wind on the face of the slave women is like the tyranny of the master who whips the slave in the name of perpetuating discipline. As Walvin emphasises:

The lash was the basic relationship between the slave and slave owner (though normally doled out by others). Corporal punishment was not, of course, the only means of exerting authority. But it was the most obvious, visible and stinging manifestation of slave owner's power. (56)

The poet successfully accomplishes to display a vivid picture of slave life reflecting the nightmarish experience of slave women in plantations. The poet observes and efficiently demonstrates the impact of the plantation system as an overtly racist regime for the slaves who are victimised and exploited by the system.

It is also important that women's descriptions of daily life are based on images, drawn from nature like the image of the piranha to depict their rape by the masters. It is also striking that women can sense an approaching danger beforehand which shows their instinctual power as it is observed in "The Song of the Creole Gang Women".

Similar to Dabydeen who brings into discussion the problems of slave women, Fred D'Aguiar deals with the issue of the double subjugation of slave women in the title poem of *Mama Dot* (1985) a book which is based upon D'Aguiar's and his grandmother's experiences of Caribbean village life in Guyana (Forbes 1). "Mama Dot" is the first poem of the volume, in which the poet summarises the life of his grandmother in a few simple words as follows:

Born on a sunday
In the kingdom of Ashante

Sold on monday
into slavery

Ran away on tuesday
cause she born free

Lost a foot on wednesday
When they catch she

Worked all thursday
till her head grey

Dropped on friday
Where they burned she.
("Mama Dot" ll. 1-12)

The poet uses the days of the week to sum up his grandmother's whole life story which is full of pain and suffering. The use of days to summarise the life of grandmother creates an effect of shortness and simplicity of grandmother's life which is short enough

to fit into seven days. From the very beginning of her life, she has to live as a slave and her struggle to get her freedom results in her being exposed to a harsher treatment and mutilation, that is, the loss of her foot. The poet in these lines emphasises the fact that slavery stands as the only inevitable destiny of black people who are born as slaves, and death is the only way to liberation.

Another dimension of the plantation system is the racial conflict between people of different ethnic origins which is unique to the Caribbean plantations, as is also expressed by Hintzen: “Caribbean identity is produced out of myriads of peoples who settled in the region from almost every part of the world” (475). This multi-racial character of the Caribbean islands is most explicitly observed in Dabydeen’s “For Mala” in *Slave Song*, in which the poet brings to light a different aspect of the plantation system. Multi-racialism is the most important characteristic of the Caribbean plantations, since the different racial and cultural groups were brought together for economic reasons. In the case of Guyana, Africans were first brought as slaves and later, after the abolition of slavery, East Indians were brought as indentured workers to carry out the task (Beckford 54). “For Mala” tries to show the tragic outcome of the racial hostility between Indians and Africans which results in the death of innocent people. The poem is written in the form of a dialogue between two women, who talk over the events of violence. Mala is an East Indian girl who is raped violently and beaten to death by the black Africans without any reason:

1st Voice:

Yesterday deh pull out young girl from de river tangle-
 Up in de net in de fish, bloat, bubby bite-
 Up, teet-mark in she troat an tigh:
 Was na pirae.
 (Dabydeen, “For Mala” ll. 1-4)

Yesterday they pulled out a young girl from the river, tangled
 Up in the nets among the fish, bloated, breasts bitten
 All over, teeth marks in her throat and tigh.
 It wasn’t piranha.
 (Dabydeen, “For Mala” 41)

What is emphasised in these lines is that the murdering of the girl who is first raped and mutilated and then thrown into the river by Africans is more brutal than the actions of the piranhas. By drawing a picture of a specific incident about the killing of a girl, Dabydeen reveals the dehumanising impact of racial hatred and confrontation. The portrayal of the girl as a fish caught in a net creates an image of hunting in which the girl becomes a prey for wild animals which left teeth marks all over the girl's body. She is consumed and eaten violently and then, thrown into the river. The striking hunting imagery reveals a shocking truth in the last line of the poem where it is emphasised that it was not piranha. It is understood by this line that she was not hunted by wild animals but a human being. The poet, at this point, successfully demonstrates that human beings can be more dangerous, violent and wilder than animals. Through a detailed description of the girl who is exposed to physical as well as sexual violence, the poet draws attention to the rising antagonism between the Africans and East Indians. The competition between Africans and East Indians who were brought to replace slave Africans for plantation jobs caused a polarisation in the plantation society. Dabydeen perceives this fragmentation as a systematic creation of racial tension by the white plantation owners in order to maintain their authority. Considering the racial conflict as the "main heritage of the Colonial Era", the poet in his notes to the poem, describes racial conflict as part of "Divide and Rule' policy" (*Slave Song* 40). It can be argued that racism becomes an instrument of destabilisation within the plantation society through the creation of social fragmentation according to racial differences, which Moore explains as follows:

A policy of divide and rule was thus made possible by the high degree of segmentation based on race. Throughout the post-emancipation 19th century, white planters and officials felt that in face of the overwhelming majority of non-white people, their security could be enhanced by playing one group off against another. (193)

Hence, racism plays an important role in creating a permanent state of racial disharmony by creating a conflict within the society. It might be argued that the disintegration within the society is only part of the systematic programme of repression which results in social instability to provide, maintain and ensure the hegemony of white dominance. Significantly, the rigidly defined race and class divisions in the

plantation system culminate in the creation of mutual abhorrence between people of different racial and cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, there appears an upheaval in the society where people exert disproportionate violence over each other which results in the death of innocent people as seen in “For Mala”. In the poem, Dabydeen makes frequent use of food imagery to describe the sexual violence applied to the girl. The womb of the girl is resembled to a “starapple” which is one of the sweetest Guyanese fruits, having a dark purple skin (*Slave Song* 38). Her being raped by the black Africans is compared to a starapple eaten by squashing it open. The bodily integrity of the girl is resembled to the shape of a fruit that is destroyed and eaten violently. The poet further continues to use food imagery: “And all de ripe juice run dung yu finga, dung yu arm an troat./ Now she hollow, now she float” (Dabydeen, “For Mala” ll. 11-12). “And all its ripe juice runs down your fingers, down your arms and throat/ Now she is hollow, now she floats” (Dabydeen, “For Mala” 41). The spilling of the blood of the girl is like the juice of the fruit eaten by men. However, image of food does not create a positive image of satisfying the feeling of hunger; on the contrary, it creates an unsatisfied greed and avarice for sexual appetite. After being raped by the Africans she is thrown into the river just like the remains of the fruit, the juice of which has been spilled. The use of food imagery in this poem is quite significant in that food usually whets one’s appetite, however, in this poem, food imagery evokes disgusting feelings by associating the consumption of food with the violent sexual consumption of women. In the following part of the poem, the violence exerted by East Indians on Africans is narrated:

Pumpkin dat feed hungry mout now stuff dem guts wid fire.
 Five-finga piece by piece drap dung from de sky an bleed in the grass
 Mala! Mala! Wheh yu deh gal? wheh yu lass?
 (Dabydeen “For Mala” ll. 17-19)

Pumpkin that fed hungry mouths now stuff their guts with fire
 Five-fingers piece by piece drop down from the sky, bleeds in the grass
 Mala! Mala! Where are you girl? Where are you lost?
 (Dabydeen, “For Mala” 42)

In these lines, Dabydeen describes the intensity of the violence and hatred between the two communities, and refers to the use of the pumpkin bomb to kill people. He draws a picture of a scene where the split-fingers are falling from heaven with the impact of the bomb. The pumpkin, which is used to feed people, is now used as a bomb to kill people.

In his notes to the *Slave Song*, Dabydeen contextualises the poem in a particular incident and reports: “An East Indian is said to have stuffed explosives in a large pumpkin and placed it in a river launch. 24 people, most of them Negroes, were drowned or blown up” (*Slave Song* 40). The accentuation of antagonism leads to a conflict in the Caribbean area where there is a continual strife between the two races. Gradually the poem turns into a lament over the death of innocent people and Mala becomes its symbol. As emphasised by the persona of the poem, the extreme form of violence will bring nothing except a curse to their society where “Gyden na go bear fruit! / Cow na go drap each year! / Wife na go grow big wid belly!” (20-22). “Garden will not bear fruit! / Cow will not drop calves each year! / Wife will not swell with child!” (Dabydeen, 42). Women’s foreboding of the future which will bring a curse upon the society as an outcome of violence carried out by the opposing groups gives way to hope at the end of the poem, where the people of different races live together in harmony rather than in conflict. The poet expresses his dream of a multifarious but at the same time harmonious society by saying that: “Blackman go pung mata, na mattie head / Feed dem pickni wid fufu, na mattie flesh” (Dabydeen, “For Mala” ll. 26-27). “Blackman will pound mortar, not people’s heads / Feed their children with fufu, not people’s flesh” (Dabydeen, “For Mala” 42). The use of mortar is significant, in that, mortar connotes the meanings of constructing and building, however, when it is used as mortaring people’s head, it connotes not construction but destruction. Therefore, the poet in this poem uses contrasting images to emphasise the necessity of development, civilisation and peace, rather than destroying of each other by applying violence. “Fufu” is the traditional African food made by “crushing plantains in a mortar and adding various spices” (Dabydeen, *Slave Song* 41). These lines are quite significant for their remarks that in the future African blacks will feed their children with fufu, “not with people’s flesh” (42). The actual conflict will give way to cultural integration and negotiation. These lines underline the fact that for the termination of violence and hatred in the society it is necessary to share and participate in the plurality of cultural diversity. In this way, Caribbean culture can be fortified, overcoming the inhabitants’ feelings of racial prejudice and racial hatred.

To put an end to the inner racial conflicts is especially important for the Caribbean people who themselves suffer from racism. Constructing unification between the different races of Caribbean society is extremely important in order to fight against racism. If there appears a division in the society, Caribbean people will not be powerful enough to challenge the dominance of colonial powers. The inner-conflicts between the groups of people who regard each other as different enable the white plantation owners to take advantage of their vulnerability. However, as people of subordinate classes who have first hand experience of racism during their enslavement, Africans and East Indians show a tendency to “ethnocentrism”, that is, to discriminate against the stranger in group contacts (Frederickson 75). As Le Vine and Campbell state, ethnocentrism:

is the technical name for this view of things in which one’s own group is the centre of everything, and all the others are scaled and rated with reference to it. Folkways correspond to it to cover both the inner and the outer relation. Each group nourishes its own pride and vanity, boasts itself superior, exalts its own divinities, and with contempt on outsiders. Each group thinks its own folkways the only right ones, and if it observes that other groups have other folkways, these excite its scorn. (8)

One manifestation of ethnocentric behaviour is unfortunately, in the form of violence between Africans and East Indians in the Caribbean. In this regard, revealing themselves as a disintegrated community where there is a perpetual struggle among the people, the indigenous groups inevitably confirm the necessity of the existence of the white masters in the Caribbean. Hence, Africans and East Indians draw the picture of a plantation society where white existence is necessary for social and economic stability because of the simple fact that the natives are incapable of ruling themselves. Furthermore, as Walwin states, with the aid of this ideology, the plantation as a system of exploitation and subordination is presented as a civilising force, “shaping uncivilised beings into useful and productive workers” (92).

Representation of the slaves as uncivilised beings is conveyed in another poem in *Slave Song*, entitled, “The Servants’ Song” which shows another aspect of plantation life, that is, the life of domestic servants. The poem is a humorous account of the relationship between the white mistress of the house and the black servants. It records a story which revolves around the servants’ search for the mistress’s lost ring. Apart from its being a

humorous folk song, the poem also deals with the issue of negative stereotyping of the black servants:

‘Yu fine me gold ring yet wha ma lass?
 ‘No Missie...yes Missie...yes Missie...No Missie’ an yu
 bow till yu neck turn rubba
 ‘Well fine am, fine am, fine am leh me see!
 Else mee go whip all ayuh nigga tief-man!
 Gwan, gwan gwan! Haak-tuh!
 So we run
 An we saach
 Wid cutlass
 Wid teach
 In bush
 In backdam
 In gyden
 In yaad
 Till we bruk-up
 Till we maad.
 (Dabydeen, “The Servants’ Song” ll. 6-20)

‘Have you found my gold ring yet that I lost’
 ‘No Missie...yes Missie... yes Missie...no Missie’, and
 You bow your until your neck becomes rubbery
 ‘Well find it, find it, find it let me see!
 Or else I’ll whip the lot of you nigger-thieves!
 Out, out, out’ (She spits after them)
 So we run
 And we search
 With cutlass
 With torch
 In bush
 In backdam
 In garden
 In yard
 Till we’re broken up
 Till we’re mad.
 (Dabydeen, “The Servants’ Song” 45)

The white mistress rebukes the servants who have no choice except finding the lost ring. They are insulted, humiliated and are accused of being thieves because they cannot find the mistress’s ring. After their frantic search for the ring, the servants following the advice of the village idiot Peter, who is “chupit in e ead since e bin young bai when e fall / dung coconut tree” (30-31), “stupid in his head since he was a young boy when he fell / down a coconut-tree” (45), they find the ring in a duck’s anus. It is an enjoyable experience for the servants since it provides a temporary escape from the tyrannical

treatment of their masters. It is a great pleasure for them to watch their mistress when they give her the ring:

Den we wash ring, tek am gi Missie
 She put am on she finga
 But we na tell she wher we fine am.
 When she show aff an she kiss she ring she na know why
 all aweh laugh so loud
 She beg we foh tell till she beat we, bribe we, bribe we, but leh she kiss
 we rass first!
 (Dabydeen, "The Servants' Song" ll. 44-50)

Then we washed the ring, took it and gave it to Missie
 She put it on her finger
 But we didn't tell her where we found it
 And when she shows off and kisses her ring she wonders why we
 all burst out laughing
 she begs us to tell till she beats us, bribes us, but let her kiss
 our arse first!
 (Dabydeen, "The Servants' Song" 45).

The life of the domestic slave is quite different from that of other slaves in that cleaning, cooking and raising children are works undertaken by the domestic slaves. The white women in the household usually complain about domestic slaves who are perceived as "indolent, sloppy, careless and apparently bent on testing the patience and tolerance of most mistresses" (Walvin 110). Lying, stealing, inadequate cleaning, improperly prepared food and badly-washed clothes are some of the faults that the masters find in the slaves. As Walvin states, these rebukes and complaints are conceived as an integral element of the broader "plantocratic ideology" to maintain the white woman's authority over domestic slaves (110). Alternatively, slaves' not fulfilling their duties properly shows the subversion of the authority of the white masters. Depicting a daily routine of the domestic slaves' life, "The Servants' Song" explicitly shows the servants' own distinctive ways of subverting the authority of their masters, and taking revenge in a witty and humorous way for their subordination. Dabydeen states, "In fact in the poem, the servants have the last laugh, as they sometimes did in real life; their resilience and satire is a sort of self-defence, necessary for survival under tyranny" (*Slave Song* 44).

David Dabydeen deals with race and racism as social categories of exclusion and murder in *Turner* (1994) which gives voice to the slaves who express their agonising

experiences on the plantation. Narrating the events from their own perspective, Dabydeen demonstrates the dehumanising impact of racism on the colonised people, unmasking the real nature of racism.

Described by Karen McIntyre as a work which “aligns creativity with political imperatives, drawing inspiration from, and creatively challenging, particularities of colonial experience”, (141) *Turner* is a long narrative poem in which Dabydeen delineates the racial oppression of the black slaves who are transported from Africa and India to the Caribbean islands. The poem is grounded on J.M.W. Turner’s painting called “Slave Ship”⁸ or “Slavers Throwing Overboard the Dead and Dying” which was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1840 and was later owned by John Ruskin (Gilroy, *Against Race* 14). As the title of the painting indicates, Turner’s painting depicts a slave ship crossing the Atlantic Ocean and the throwing of the slaves over board. In his Preface to *Turner*, Dabydeen states, “it is not unusual for ship captains to order the drowning of sick slaves (who would fetch a low price on landing in the Caribbean), and claim their insurance value on the basis of goods lost at sea” (ix). In other words, due to the unhealthy conditions on the ships during the Atlantic slave trade, many of the slaves became seriously ill on voyage. Thus, the profit seeking ship captains preferred to throw sick slaves into the sea, because of the fact that the insurance companies paid only for the dead and lost slaves during the voyage, not for the ones who arrived ill (Fulford 1). The slaves were regarded not as human beings but as goods.

Turner’s painting depicts the bodies of dying slaves and the emphasis of the painting is not on the dying slaves but on the sublime sky, “turning a moment of horror into something beautiful” (Fulford 1). Turner’s painting which stands as an “enduring expression of the very essence of English civilisation” as Gilroy puts it (*Against Race* 13), turns out to be an “invocation of racial terror, commerce, and England’s ethico-political degeneration” in the poetry of David Dabydeen (Gilroy, *Against Race* 16). In his preface to *Turner*, Dabydeen states:

My poem focuses on the submerged head of the African in the foreground of Turner’s painting. In has been drowned in Turner’s (and other artists’) sea for centuries. When it awakens it can only partially recall the sources of its life, so it invents a body, a biography, and peoples in imagined landscape. Most of the

names of birds, animals and fruit are made up. Ultimately, however, the African rejects the fabrication of an idyllic past. His real desire is to begin anew in the sea but he is too trapped by grievous memory to escape history. Although the sea has transformed him- bleached him of colour and complicated his sense of gender- he still recognises himself as ‘nigger’. (ix-x)

As it is indicated by the poet himself, the poem dwells on the death of the slaves during the slave trade with the aim of showing the dehumanising effects of racism on black people. The submerged head of the black slave depicted in an elevated style in Turner’s painting gives inspiration to Dabydeen to deal with the issue of slavery and racism. Thus, what is in the periphery of Turner’s painting becomes very much the centre of Dabydeen’s poetry. *Turner* is a long, narrative poem about a stillborn child named Turner who is reborn out of the sea into a new life, dispossessed of his blackness. The poem consists of sections which are given numbers instead of titles since they are connected to each other. The birth of Turner is told at the beginning of section I as follows:

Stillborn from all the signs. First a woman sobs
 Above the creak of timbers and the cleaving
 Of the sea...

 The part born, sometimes with its mother,
 Tossed overboard. Such was my bounty
 Delivered so unexpectedly that at first
 I could not believe this miracle of fate,
 This longed-for gift of motherhood.
 What was deemed mere food for sharks will become
 My fable. I named it Turner
 As I have given fresh names to birds and fish
 And humankind, all things living but unknown,
 Dimly recalled, or dead.
 (Dabydeen, “T” 1-3, 16-25)

The above lines give an account of a slave woman’s giving birth to a dead baby on the slave ship. Although he is born dead, later the baby is reborn in the sea which is a miraculous incident for the persona. The baby as a “living-dead” is named by the poet as Turner. The child loses its mother and language at birth, namely, his African roots. Being a disempowered child who loses everything, Turner is “unknown, / dimly recalled, or dead” (Dabydeen, “T” 24-25), and thus, represents the racial violence

inflicted on the African slaves by the slave traders. As time passes, the stillborn child remembers the past as he expresses in section VII:

I had forgotten the years, now wakened
 By the creature that washed towards me.
 Yet another ship passed, familiar sails stretched
 Upon racks of wind, ropes taut against spars,
 Enough to rip a man's hand trapped there,
 Careless with rum, wistful for a shore
 Of women. None of these things disturbed me
 Then, not the commandments of braided
 Officers, nor the sobbing of offenders
 Tied naked to the mast, cold winds like gannets
 Gathering at their flesh. For years I had known
 These scenes, and I had forgotten the years-
 Until it broke the waters, close
 To my face, salt splash burning my eyes
 Awake.
 (Dabydeen, "VII" 1-15)

The child who is reborn into a new life gradually remembers the experiences that he has forgotten. These are the experiences of a slave life. As the sea waters splash on his face, he gradually remembers brief sketches of the physical punishment of the slaves who are tied naked to the mast of the ship. These scenes do not make any sense to him as if he is paralysed by the traumatic experience of slavery. It is explicitly demonstrated that the disempowered slaves are treated ruthlessly which constitutes the most pernicious example of racial violence inflicted upon the black Africans who are considered to be the commercial property of the slave traders. The experience of colonial enslavement which is a recurrent motif in *Turner* reappears in section XI:

... 'Nigger!' it cried, seeing
 Through the sea's disguise as only children can,
 Recognising me below my skin long since
 Washed cleaned of the colour of sin, scab, smudge
 Pestilence, death, rats that carry plague,
 Darkness such as blots the sky when locusts swarm.
 (Dabydeen, "XI" 17-22)

These lines show that Turner, the stillborn slave child, is transformed in the sea and gets rid of his black skin, and is born into a new life. However, he still sees himself as a

“nigger” and his desire for a new life is aggravated by the oppressive remembrances of the days of slavery.

The stillborn infant’s constructing his identity can be explained by Lacan’s idea of identity which is constructed through a series of stages beginning before birth. According to Lacan, an individual constructs his identity at the “imaginary stage” where the infant identifies himself with his own image in the mirror (Lacan 4). The child constructs his identity by making a distinction between his own self reflected in the mirror and the other. While the identification with his reflection in the mirror gives him a sense of wholeness, the awareness of his difference from the others gives him a sense of absence and lack. Within the context of *Turner*, it can be argued that the child’s process of identity formation is disrupted and remains incomplete. His being stillborn is the first evidence which shows the fragmentation in the construction of his identity. Secondly, the child in the poem dies in the sea after a torturing experience of slavery and struggles to be reborn into a new life where he will construct a new identity. However, he is so much under the influence of his slave past that he cannot acquire a fully developed identity. He is so much haunted by the slave consciousness and the memory of the past that he can never incorporate a free existence into the present. It might be for this reason that the child is considered to be a “living-dead”. These lines can be interpreted symbolically to imply freedom after slavery has not brought a real sense of freedom to the life of the black people who are totally deprived of their language, culture, history to the point of deprivation of their humanity. They are overburdened by the horror of slavery and cannot recover their future out of the past.

Colonial racism as it is discussed above, is closely integrated with the institution of slavery in which “men in the mass were simply held equal to merchandise” (Guillaumin 44). As Cheboksarov states “the notion that different groups of individuals were separated by natural inequalities first grew up in societies founded on slavery” (347). The notions of human being as a merchandise, a property, and separation of human beings according to their natural inequalities are the manifestations of racism as explored throughout the poems of Dabydeen and D’Aguiar. After exploring the integration of racism within the institution of slavery illustrated in Dabydeen’s *Slave*

Song and *Turner*, and D'Aguiar's "Mama Dot", it is necessary to investigate the contemporary forms of racism. As mentioned in the Introduction, contemporary racism became a highly controversial issue as a result of post-war immigration after the 1950s, culminating in violent street crimes and racial conflicts during the 1960s and 1970s, which are illustrated in the poetry of Linton Kwesi Johnson, David Dabydeen and Fred D'Aguiar.

The issues of racial discrimination and the poor living conditions of black people who are exposed to poverty, criminalisation and racism are serious problems which are explored intensively in the poetry of Linton Kwesi Johnson. Johnson struggles to represent the complexities and contradictions of everyday experiences of the black people in his poetry. As Walker points out, Johnson's poetry represents the poetry of the 1970s, dealing with the "struggles of the Caribbean diasporic communities and the struggles of all racial minorities in the U.K." (194). Peter Hitchcock, similarly states:

Indeed, Linton Kwesi Johnson's voice is at once a critique of the imagined community of 'Britishness' resplendent in the lamentable wave of authoritarian populism now known as Thatcherism...And the African-Caribbean peoples of Britain, like their post-colonial Asian counterparts, are caught up in the manichean logic of exclusion / inclusion that derives the hegemonic ethnos and its attendant phantasms. (10)

His first volume of poetry titled *Voices of the Living and the Dead* (1974) demonstrates how the repressed history of servitude affected the contemporary experiences of black youths in the "Thatcherite Britain" with its anti-immigration laws, explicit racism of the police force, politicians and the public (Corcoran 198). The collection consists of two parts and the first part includes a long drama performance written in verse form which was first staged in June 1973 at the Keskidee Centre, which is London art and culture institution encouraging young black artists to perform their works, and where "many an actor, comedian, writer, community worker and teacher met with like-minded people and attended events such as lectures by Angela Davis, Malcolm X and Martin Luther King" (Morris and Roberts 1). The second part of the collection includes two poems which are based on the experiences of black people who became a particular target for racist attacks during the 1970s. Exploring the frustration of his generation of young black men, Johnson in *Voices of Living and Dead* articulates not only the black people's

experience of racism but also a reinforcement of black power (Page 29). In this work, Linton Kwesi Johnson is mainly concerned with giving direct and effective messages to the black people rather than exploring his poetic and artistic talent. To this end, the poems in this volume are written in a simple language with the frequent use of repetitions to serve as a propaganda machine for the poet. In an interview, Johnson comments on the political context of his poems,

...we are not victims and we don't need to be led by the Socialist Workers Party, and the Communist Party, and all these parties who were preying and trying to exploit the oppression of black people, and that we had a history of resistance and rebellion, and that we could organise our own selves. We weren't separatists in any sense, but we believed that we had to give leadership to our own struggles and build alliances with progressive forces who were willing to support us. In fact, quite a few of my recordings and verses in those days were simply serving a propaganda function. I wouldn't elevate them into any great poems, but they were things that needed to be said at the time, and so I said them. (Caesar 70)

As the poet expresses clearly in the interview, he perceives poetry as medium to convey his intention to emphasise the necessity of a black history based upon resistance. He suggests that racial violence cannot be prevented by the political parties, but by forming an alliance to fight against the victimisation of black people.

“Voices of the Living and the Dead” is written in the form of dialogues between the Living and the Dead. There is a call for the formation of solidarity among the black youths against the discriminative attitude of British society which sees black people as a threat to the British way of life since they cannot be totally integrated into British society. By giving voice to the Dead, the poet draws attention to the racial violence directed at black people:

DEAD. It is the voice of I who am dead
Near your feet
Travelling through a tunnel of a bleeding
moment parted.
Tell me my brother
Can you see the past spark
Which ignited this train of flame and death?
(Johnson, “The Voices of the Living and the Dead” 23-29)

In this poem, the Dead is personified and approaches the dead body of the black youth and tries to understand the reason for his death and questions the violent confrontation between black and white youths which result in the death of many people. What is emphasised in the poem is the increasing racial tension, ignored by politicians for many years, leading to the escalation of a polarisation in British society and culminating in an outbreak of social upheaval. The question posed by the Dead is answered by the Living as follows:

LIVING. In the markets
 flies had taken to the food
 In our houses
 cockroaches had taken to our beds
 In the fields
 insects were having a feast
 In the streets
 the wind was to be heard at nights
 But no footsteps.
 (Johnson, "The Voices of the Living and the Dead" 122-130)

The lines above highlight the unequal living conditions of black immigrants, who constitute the poorest, the most underprivileged and racially disadvantaged group in "Britain's decaying inner cities" (Dawson 60). There is an explicit resentment in the speech of the Living, which displays the facts of racial discrimination in almost every aspect of everyday life. A form of class distinction is explicitly shown in this speech where the marginalized people are forced to live in unhealthy living conditions. At the end of his speech, the Living also refers to the problem of security in the streets at nights for the reason that violent street disorders and the concern with the problem of black criminality foster every young black as a potential suspect for the police (Dawson 62). The last voice in the *Voices of the Living and the Dead* is given to the Living who accentuates the necessity of alliance to fight against police brutality and the racist attacks of the white majority who conceive the black presence in Britain as a menace to the unity of British society:

LIVING. But before we gather in the crops
 A harvest of the bodies of all
 Who are dead, we who are alive will make.
 Your cold flesh will be fashioned into coffins
 For our now burning flesh
 And togetherness will be firmly established.

All rebel flesh is one flesh.

Your bones will be our fortress
 Our guard against fear and foe
 And victory in our hands
 Libations of blood we will pour
 on your graves...
 the cold blood of the enemy
 carried in their skulls.
 (Johnson, "The Voices of the Living and the Dead" 190-203)

The speech of the Living in these lines illustrates the number of people who are killed during the conflicts. The persona uses the metaphor of harvesting. Instead of harvesting crops which is a sign of fertility and prosperity, black people harvest the dead bodies of their friends which is a sign of sterility, death and destruction. In spite of such a great loss of lives, the poem still emphasises the determination and hope for unification and victory in the second part. The persona tries to recreate feelings of revenge and fearlessness against the enemy. In these lines, the poet calls for an active participation in a black struggle against racial violence. What is more striking is that the poet views rebellion and resistance as the only solution to make the British society accept the black presence. Further, instead of being passive victims of racial attacks, he chooses to organise black people to fight against oppression. Associating black youths with criminal activities can be considered as the root cause of the alienation and marginalisation of minority communities. John Solomos underlines the ideological perspective of black criminality and points out that:

The ideological image of the involvement of young blacks in mugging and other forms of street crime has provided the basis for the development of strategies of control aimed at keeping young blacks off the streets and keeping the police in control of particular localities which have been identified both in popular and official discourses as crime prone or potential trouble spots. It has also helped to bring to the forefront a preoccupation with the social and economic roots of alienation and criminal activity among young blacks. (*Race and Racism in Britain* 145)

The potential source of conflict, revealed in the poem, is the frustration of the black minorities who are excluded from equal participation in British society due to the development of discrimination in almost every aspect of their social life. The attempt of the British society to set up strict control over the black population, who are put into the

category of the problem group, necessitated subjugation and eventually led to a counter struggle among black people, as is explicitly observed in this poem.

In creating and fostering the racial conflicts between blacks and whites, the media also plays an important role in constructing the notion of black people as “a threat to social stability and cohesion” (Solomos, *Race and Racism in Britain* 30). Fred D’Aguiar’s “Black Ink”, published in *British Subjects* (1993), is an important poem which shows the power of the media in alienating the black population in the United Kingdom:

Reading the Sundays I wash my hands
Four or five times. I never lick my fingers
To turn the pages; not since 1982 when I read
The Name of the Rose- the way those monks died. (1-4)

D’Aguiar’s witty style is felt from the begging of the poem when the persona takes up a Sunday newspaper to read it. The biased attitude of the media to the problem of racism is underlined through the persona’s suspicion that the paper might be poisoned. Making a reference to Umberto Eco’s novel *The Name of the Rose*, the persona resembles himself to the monks who were poisoned by licking their fingers while reading Aristotle’s *Poetics*. The persona’s insecurity leads him to be suspicious of everything, and he thinks that when he licks his fingers to turn the pages, he will be poisoned by the papers. These lines can be read metaphorically to imply the provocative attitude of the media towards racial issues and stirring up of racial hatred. In the following stanzas, the poem focused on the concept of blackness:

My skin reacts against the detergent in soap
Forcing me to use a cocoa-butter moisturiser,
This in turn attracts more newsprint.
If unwashed, my hands would shine ebony,

No blacker. I note how yesterday my tone
Was lighter; how today rain insists,
In a scherzo belted out like an old 78,
On blackening this city’s red brick walls. (9-16)

The persona’s hands are blackened by the newsprint so that he needs to wash his hands. Talking about his skin’s reaction to the soap which forces him to use a moisturiser, the

persona's hands are further blackened by the newsprint. He tries to get rid of this blackness by washing his hands. According to McLeod, "the image of newsprint blackening the speaker's hands literalizes the ways in which the media is complicit in promoting a poisonous racializing rhetoric which converts an 'ebony' hand into part of a 'black body', just as the rain insists on 'blackening this city's red brick walls'" (*Postcolonial London* 172). As McLeod states, the persona in the poem finds a comparison between his own self and the city whose walls are blackened as the rain falls. Just like the city's brick walls are blackened by the rain, he also feels blackened both literally and metaphorically as he reads the newspapers. He is literally blackened because of the black ink of the newsprints, and he is metaphorically blackened because of the racially intense provocative media which shows the black population as the source of racial problems. In the last stanza of the poem, the persona comments on the context of the newspapers:

The news is hot, hungry, exclusive after
 Exclusive with respected bylines,
 Matching action-pictures and written in
 Trick ink which disappears as it dries. (17-20)

In the persona's description of the news, the word "exclusive" is especially important because of the fact that just like the news items are excluded from each other by bylines, the news is also characterised as exclusive because black people are separated from the society by the news. Furthermore, the title of the poem is also significant in that the media uses black ink which further blackens the minorities by associating them with criminal activity and promoting stereotypes and racial prejudices against blacks, and thus excluding them (Balkaran 1). In the last line of the poem, the black ink is described as "trick ink" which deludes people by making false news about black people by further blackening and accusing them of being the source of the problems.

The problem of immigration and its gaining a racial structure, evident in the increase of hatred against the immigrants who are thought to be the source of Britain's economic problems is another issue that is associated with contemporary racism and explored in detail by Dabydeen in his *Coolie Odyssey* (1988). *Coolie Odyssey* is mainly preoccupied with the Indian experience in Guyana. *Coolie Odyssey* includes the

diasporic experiences of the Indian indentured workers from India to Guyana, and from Guyana to Britain, by bringing together the past experiences of slavery with the present situation of immigrant workers in Britain. “Burning Down the Fields” in *Coolie Odyssey* is a long poem which is significant in depicting the period of slavery, and the end of slavery, expressing the black people’s yearning for a new life and hopeful future in Britain as immigrant workers. The poem is divided into four parts and each part displays a turning point in the life of the blacks, representing a different stage in their life. The first part includes a celebration of the end of slavery and the liberation of the slaves:

In the moonless nights you make cane-ash weep
Over the land, blackening
The tooth of the overseer, twitching
His hand with dream of revenge.
(Dabydeen, “Burning Down the Fields” 1-4)

The first impression that is acquired in these lines is a simple natural event of the rain of the cane-ash blackening the earth. However, it is not difficult to perceive the implicit questioning of the colonial system. The image of blackness, created in this poem is not associated with the slave as usually expected but, contrarily, it is associated with the white master. The tooth of the overseer, that is, the slave master, is blackened by the cane-ash. With an attempt to resolve the problem of blackness, the poet raises a moral question about the enslavement of man by man. As Fanon also states, “the disaster of the man of color lies in the fact that he was enslaved. The disaster and the inhumanity of the white man lie in the fact that somewhere he has killed men” (*Black Skin, White Masks* 231). The racial hatred of the white master who burns with the desire for revenge, as is expressed in the fourth line, is contrasted with the vitality and happiness of the slaves who create an atmosphere of carnival to celebrate their liberation:

Night faints in the kerosene fumes.
Your scratch a match to its heart and await
Exploding drum-beat, mash_
Ing-down-the-road feet
of Creole carnival.
(Dabydeen, “Burning Down the Fields” 13-17)

The metaphor used in line 13 where the night gives way to the daylight with the extinguishing of the kerosene lamp is quite significant in that the birth of a new day also marks a turning point in the history of black people that is the end of slavery and the beginning of liberation. Just like scratching a match against a heart of darkness, a similar match is lit for black people, enlightening their life and putting an end to a long period of enslavement. It is a carnival day for black people who celebrate their liberty.

The description of the setting of the plantation gives way to the depiction of the transportation of the blacks from Guyana to Britain as workers: “Windrushed the flames reach the shores of England / Chars, chamars disembarking from boat-trains” (Dabydeen, “Burning Down the Fields” 18-19). The first wave of immigration to Britain started with a ship called the *Empire Windrush* carrying 500 immigrants from Jamaica in 1948 (Arnold 51). Furthermore, it also marks the beginning of a racially motivated legislation concerning the immigrants, the unequal job opportunities and discrimination (Brown 4). Hence, it would not be wrong to state that the arrival of the *Empire Windrush* in Britain is a conspicuous harbinger of the transformation in post-war Britain from being an empire to a form of nation-state, and trying to recover itself from the ruinous impact of war “as a solution to Britain’s future labour shortages (Brown 3). As Wambu asserts, “The *Windrush* pioneers were thus coming ‘home’, to a place that was rapidly changing” (1). After the depiction of the blacks disembarking from the *Empire Windrush* in a Britain seen as the mother country that attracts the peoples of the ex-colonies with her economic opportunities, the poem gives voice to the great expectations and aspirations of immigrants:

i am not built for work
 like bus-conducting
 or lifting factory box
 i want to get on in this world
 as soon as i save some cash
 i will open up a corner-shop-
 Then you won't see me for dust
 i will make the children burn
 electricity late at night reading
 book that will take them to university
 and give them bright certificate.
 (Dabydeen, “Burning Down the Fields” 26-36)

The persona in these lines is an immigrant who comes to Britain, full of hopes for a more prosperous future. Conversely, the occupations he undertakes upon his arrival in Britain are low-skilled jobs such as bus-conducting and lifting factory boxes as he himself indicates. The stylistic features of the poem, which are the lack of capitalisation and the use of broken grammar, are important elements which reveal the persona's illiteracy and lack of his linguistic competence. After expressing his resentment towards this present situation, he consoles himself by claiming that this will be a temporary situation because he will soon climb the social ladder by earning money and making his children get a good education.

In these lines, Dabydeen draws attention to a serious issue of racial discrimination in the labour market. As Ruth Brown stresses it, "many of the Caribbean workers who came to Britain in the 1950s and 1960s were highly skilled workers, but once here racism ensured that virtually all were forced into semi-skilled or unskilled-work" (10). Hence, the migrant labourers became a cheap way of meeting the demand for workers. As a result, the immigrant workers from the Caribbean could only hold jobs which were rejected by the white workers. What is important is that race and racism were the most important elements in determining job opportunities. As an instrument of exploitation, racism appears in a great variety of guises and within the context of this poem it appears as the exploitation of the work force of immigrants and as discrimination in job opportunities. The persona's yearning to be incorporated into the mainstream British society, benefiting from equal opportunities with the white people, and his aspirations and desires for a better future, give way to a sense of disillusionment in the last part of the poem:

Youth preen their bodies, put on their disco robes:
 The police will make music with their sirens
 And the home-owners will play their burglar alarms
 And dance will grip the heels of the crucified
 And the wood-chips on the black people's shoulders
 Will heap up huge bonfires around which
 The wretched will gather to give praise
 To the overpowering love of God.
 (Dabydeen, "Burning Down the Fields" 39-49)

These lines illustrate the social relations between the blacks and the whites in their everyday lives. Certain keywords are given in the poem defining the major structure of race relations in Britain. Although not expressed directly in the poem, it is implied that what characterises the relationship between the whites and the blacks is the criminality of the blacks and the racial conflict between them. Therefore, the implications of the police sirens and burglar alarms are a foreboding of the coming racial tensions and institutionalisation of racism. Moreover, in the last five lines of this quotation, there is striking crucifixion imagery. Black people's struggle is resembled to the crucifixion of Christ who sacrifices himself for the salvation of his people. "Wood-chips on the black people's shoulders" (43), reflect the suffering and pain of black people in their fight for freedom. However, as the poet expresses in the following lines, these wood-chips will create "huge bonfires around which / the wretched will gather to give praise / To the overpowering love of God" (44-46). The suffering of black people will be a model for all the poor and powerless people who will gather around the bonfires that are ignited by the black people. Quite ironically, although these people are neglected and left powerless, they will be praising the overpowering love of God.

Similar to Dabydeen who depicts the feelings of a slave who is tortured by his white masters, Fred D'Aguiar also gives voice to the suffering of a slave in his poem "At the Grave of an Unknown African" published in *British Subjects* (1993). The poem consists of two parts; in the first part the persona is a black British who stands at the grave of an unknown African while in the second part, the persona is the dead African himself. In part I, the persona compares himself to the dead African by comparing the past times of slavery with the present:

African slave without a name. I'd call this home
By now. Would you? Your unknown soldier's tomb

Stands for shipload after shipload that docked,
Unloaded, watered, scrubbed, exercised and restocked

Thousands more souls for sale in Bristol's port;
Cab drivers speak of it all with yesterday's hurt. (11-16)

Although the persona living in England perceives it as his home, he is doubtful about whether the dead African would think England as his home because of the simple fact that he was brought to England as a slave during slave trade centuries ago. The persona later concentrates on British slave trade and transportation of slaves from Africa to the Bristol port for sale. As James Rowley states, “in the late seventeenth century and during the first three decades of the eighteenth London dominated the British slave trade. Eclipsed by the West Coast ports of Bristol and Liverpool in midcentury, London recovered over Bristol in the last half-century of the trade” (18). Once the persona thinks about the dead African slave, his mind goes back in time and he begins to think about slavery itself and the lives of those slaves who were transported to Bristol. Later the persona’s mind switches to the present, compares the present day experiences of the blacks to the dead African who lies peacefully in his grave:

St Paul’s, Toxteth, Brixton, Tiger Bay and Handsworth:
Petrol bombs flower in the middle of roads, a sudden growth

At the feet of police lines longer than any cricket pitch.
African slave, your namelessness is the wick and petrol mix.

Each generation catches the one fever love can’t appease;
Nor Molotov cocktails, nor when they embrace in peace. (19-24)

The place names that are mentioned in the poem, St Paul’s, Toxteth, Brixton, Tiger Bay and Handsworth are the areas of growing “outbreaks of unrest” in the 20th century where the racial conflicts between the black people and the police force resulted in violence on the both parts (Solomos, *Race and Racism in Britain* 143). After describing the hard living conditions in a war like atmosphere among the petrol bombs and Molotov cocktails, the persona underlines the fact that the namelessness of the African slave and the other slaves like him are the igniters of the fires for black people to resist against the police force. In other words, the persona emphasises that the present generation of black people are taking the revenge of their ancestors who were enslaved and sold as property and who did not even have a name.

While the persona tries to understand the feelings of the dead African slave in the first part of the poem, the dead African slave becomes the persona in the second part of the poem. He begins his speech with a rebuke to the first persona and states:

Stop there black Englishman before you tell a bigger lie
You mean me well by what you say but I can't stand idly by

The vandal who keeps coming and does what he calls fucks
On the cool gravestones, also pillages and wrecks.

If he knew not so much my name but what happened to Africans,
He'd maybe put in an hour or two collecting his Heinekens. (1-6)

He opposes the speaker in the first part, who claims that the unknown African who lies in his grave is unaware of what is happening in the present day, and how hard life is within racial conflicts. The persona claims that he is not blind about the things going on around his grave. His grave is destroyed and harmed by the whites whom he calls vandals. He further states that those people could have the chance to know what happened to Africans in the past, they would have shown a little respect to their grave by collecting their beer-cans.

In brief, Fred D'Aguiar, in this poem, tries to show that race and racism still continue to be a major problem in Britain, by making a comparison between the past and present. The black population are still exposed to the same treatment of subordination and discrimination. Although they are not slaves any longer, black people continue to be the targets of racial hatred either by the white population or by police brutality. They are forced to live under the shadow of police control.

The categorisation of the black people as a problem group is also illustrated in detail in another poem by Fred D'Aguiar, "Ballad of the Throwaway People" published in *British Subjects* (1993). D'Aguiar specifically brings to attention the operation of racial discrimination in almost every social institution, and shows the isolation of the black population as a result of racially motivated legislations against immigration. D'Aguiar expresses the feelings of animosity of the black people as follows:

We are the throwaway
 people
 The problem that won't go away
 people

 The we have no use for you
 people
 The blood we had to have was tainted
 people.
 (D'Aguiar, "Ballad of the Throwaway People" 1-4, 9-12)

Black people are explicitly defined as the problem in this poem. The poet reacts with frustration and anger with the hostile living conditions of the black people who, as victims of racism, frequently find themselves in conflict with British society which sees the presence of the black population as a great problem, disrupting the peace and security of contemporary Britain. The physical structure of the poem is also significant. The lines consist of long and short lines which complete each other meaningfully but the repeated words "people" are all separated from the previous lines to imply the marginalisation of black people from the rest of the society. After referring to the discrimination and exclusion which leave the black people in isolation, the poet underlines the dominant hegemonic discourse of the black race being inferior to the white race as it is expressed explicitly in line 11. The poet further continues to delineate how little value is given to the black people whose life seems useless:

The priests are reluctant to bury
 people
 The buried at the edge of cemeteries
 people
 The keep your grief private
 people
 The world has no love for us
 people.
 (D'Aguiar, "Ballad of the Throwaway People" 21-28)

D'Aguiar gives voice to the difficulties of living in a world that has no love for black people. Not only in life, but also after their death are black people given any value. The title of the poem is also significant which is the "Ballad of the Throwaway People". Ballad, as a literary form, is part of a song tradition telling a generally tragic story in a simple language, told through dialogue and action (Cuddon 71). The poem, in this

respect, is a ballad of “throwaway people”, song of black people who are othered by the society. The poem narrates the tragedy of black people who find it difficult to live in a hostile society. The operation of racism at first glance seems to be the social, political and economic segregation of the black people in the inner city areas, but closer examination reveals its deep psychological dimensions on the life of the black people who develop a sense of worthlessness as an outcome of racism. D’Aguiar, in this poem, puts emphasis on the impact of racial exclusion on the life of black people who are separated from their origins, marginalised in the society, discriminated, pushed away and abused in the streets, and refused by British society.

Furthermore, the poet becomes more specific in his criticism of the deteriorating living conditions of black people, and goes further in his exploration of institutional racism in another poem called “Inner City”. In this poem, D’Aguiar explicitly demonstrates the tremendous realities of the inner city areas of Britain where the white and the black dichotomy reached its peak. The corruption within the institution of the police force as an instrument of oppression and exploitation is pinpointed; he says:

Who’s to knock their heads together
 Now that the bobby on the beat
 is part of the gang you meet at night
 roaming the city’s streets,
 brazen in their uniform,
 smiling through clenched teeth?
 (D’Aguiar, “Inner City” 7-12)

The police force which is patrolling the streets of the inner city areas with the supposed aim of providing security, itself constitutes a threat for the security of people. Living in the inner city areas in poor conditions, the black population that is associated in discourse of racism with criminality and violence have themselves become victims of police violence. The order and neatness of the police officers’ clothes are in complete contradiction with the corruption of the police institution. The reason of this corruption apparently is the fact that racism is institutionalized within the state apparatuses which cause social, cultural, economical and political inequalities within the society. As Sivanandan states, racism is an instrument of discrimination and exploitation:

In Britain, with its long tradition of racism over five centuries and three continents, racial prejudice has become an intrinsic part of popular culture, racial discrimination has come to inhere in the institutions of the society and racist laws and policies have characterised state intervention at the point of economic need....In sum, the laws, the administration, the criminal justice system- the whole state apparatus in Britain- is rife with racism and gives the lie to the government's pretensions to counter institutional racism and the culture which gives it a habitation and a name. (2, 3)

Therefore, racism, which is institutionalised within the criminal justice system and other institutions, leads to the overrepresentation of black people and the inevitable stigmatisation of blacks as criminals in the view of the police as well as the general public. The idea that the blacks are the source of social problem proves itself to be wrong as it is explicitly revealed in this poem. In the following part of the poem, a specific incident of the killing of a black girl is reported:

The children report the attack
as something miraculous. One says
he heard the girl's bones crack.
Another liked how the dog wagged
throughout. A third bragged
that after a while it was hard
to tell the colour of the ground
from the girl's smooth brown:
both were dug-up, both were raw;
both were under English law.
The children grow up feeling like dogs,
they worship stumps for gods.
(D'Aguiar, "Inner City" 19-30)

With the aim of reflecting the desperate situation of the inner city areas which are characterised with poverty and crime, the poet brings forth the subordination of people to the intolerable living conditions caused by the failure of law and order in the society. The police, far from solving the problem, constitute the most important part of the problem. Moreover, another striking point that needs to be emphasised is the children that witness the attack on the black girl. Children should be normally expected to be sensitive to the awfulness of the situation but, on the contrary, they report the violent event as an exciting miraculous incident because of the simple fact that violence has become an integral part of everyday life in the inner cities. What is more shocking in the poem is that children almost delight in violence and bloodshed and brag about it as if it

were something positive. The “wagging” of dogs is also important which shows that even the dogs feel joy and happiness in this violence. After emphasising the failure of the British law system to improve the poor living conditions of the inner city, the poem ends with a hint of foreboding. Children who are brought up in such living conditions are accustomed to violence and eventually turn out to be criminals by losing their humanity.

Both the “Ballad of Throwaway People” and the “Inner City” show that Fred D’Aguiar specifically draws attention to the problem of racism which makes life difficult for black and coloured people in Britain. D’Aguiar’s poetry reflects how racism turns out to be a crucial problem in contemporary Britain, causing the escalation of tensions between the blacks and the whites and creating polarisation in the society.

Subsequently, unlike Fred D’Aguiar who demonstrates how racism is institutionalised strongly within state apparatuses, which leads to the victimization of the black population and their marginalisation, Dabydeen in “Coolie Mother”, a poem which is included in *Coolie Odyssey*, tries to show the other side of the coin by concentrating on the life of the people who did not immigrate to Britain and preferred to stay in their own countries. The poet reflects the situation of Guyana after a long period of colonial exploitation. The poem depicts an Indian woman named Jasmattie who lives in poverty:

Jasmattie live in bruk
 Down hut big like Bata shoe-box,
 Beat clothes, weed yard, chop wood, feed fowl
 For this body and that body and every blasted body,
 Fetch water, all day fetch water like if the whole-
 Whole slow-flowing Canje river God create
 Just for she one own bucket.
 (Dabydeen, “Coolie Mother” 1-7)

The language that is used to describe the life of Jasmattie is broken and consists of broken words. Furthermore, the repetition of the words “body” and “fetch water” reflect the monotonous life of Jasmattie who is fed up with working all her life. There is a detailed description of the hard living conditions of Jasmattie who has to carry water from the Canje River. The poet ironically uses a shoe-box to describe the house where

Jasmattie lives. To emphasise the smallness of Jasmattie's house, the poet uses Bata as one of the famous shoe trademarks which represents the big industrial companies. A striking contradiction can be observed between the poverty and backwardness of ex-colonies and the industrial development of Western countries. Jasmattie lives in such a terrible condition that she has to carry her own water which shows the fact that there is no infrastructure where she lives. Daily routines which are displayed in the poem like beating the clothes, weeding the yard, chopping wood, and feeding the fowl are the jobs which require great physical strength, which Jasmattie lacks, as is indicated in the poem: "And she cough blood on the ground but mash it in / Because Jasmattie heart hard, she mind set hard" (Dabydeen, "Coolie Mother" 10-11). The poet draws the picture of a society whose economy is destroyed by colonial domination and exploitation, and whose people live in a state of extreme poverty and sickness. Hence, the people living in the Caribbean have no other choice but to suffer or immigrate to Britain. In the last part of the poem, Jasmattie expresses her desire to save money with the aim of rescuing her son from poverty:

And she son Harilall got to go school in Georgetown,
Must wear clean starch pants, or they go laugh at he,
Strap leather on he foot, and he must read book,
Learn talk proper, take exam, got to England university,
Not turn out like he rum-sucker chamar dadee.
(Dabydeen, "Coolie Mother" 14-18)

Jasmattie has an ambition to provide a good life for her son by sending him to university in Britain where he will learn to speak proper English and absorb Western civilization. What Jasmattie tries to escape from is not only the poverty and economic problems in the Caribbean, but also her own culture from which she strives to save herself by incorporating herself to the British society. Going to a university and talking properly seem to be efficient ways to negate her inferiority. Colonised people's struggle to be incorporated into the white culture can be interpreted as the after effect of slavery during colonialism on the psychology of black people. Frantz Fanon in the *Wretched of the Earth* notes that colonialism, due to its "systematic negation of the other person", leads people to ask themselves the question constantly: "In reality, who am I?" (200). Similarly, in this poem also Jasmattie's struggle to get her son a good education and talk proper English is a demonstration of a black man's endeavour to throw off the burden of

colonial slavery which imposes a racial inferiority on the black people. The poem, in this regard, has considerable importance in its exploration of the black people's sense of dislocation, and their endeavours to be accepted by and incorporated into the British society. According to Fanon black people objectify themselves as a result of the negation of their identity "On that day, completely dislocated, unable to be abroad with the other, the white man, who unmercifully imprisoned me, I took myself far off from my own presence, far indeed, and made myself an object" (*Black Skin, White Masks* 112). Within the context of "Coolie Mother", Jasmattie's emphasis on language and education as the only way to acquire approval of the British society can be conceived as the denial of her black identity. The poem openly displays the fact that even after the end of slavery, black people are still under the influence of colonial ideology which legitimises the exploitation of the black people under the pretext of the superiority of British culture and civilisation, and that the blacks have to acquire English language and culture in order to eradicate the primitiveness of their own native culture.

Contrary to "Coolie Mother", which reflects the aspirations of Jasmattie who tries to provide a better future for her son to prevent him from the fate of becoming a cane worker like his father, "Coolie Son" is written from the perspective of Jasmattie's son. Contrary to his mother's convictions, the son never changes his language and speaks in Creole:

England nice, snow and dem thing,
A land dey say fit for a king,
Iceapple plenty on de tree and bird a-sing-
Is the beginning of what dey call 'The Spring'.
(Dabydeen, "Coolie Son" 7-10)

The boy, in these lines, expresses his first impressions of Britain which fascinates him at first sight. The snow, iceapple which is "the fruit of female palm tree" and the concept of spring are the things that he has never seen in the Caribbean (<http://www.flickr.com>). He talks about Britain as a magical country which endows enchanting experiences on foreigners, not as a place of racial conflicts. He has not yet been acquainted with disillusionment and he has not been confronted with racial prejudice, and thus is full of hope and wishes to fulfil his dreams. While the poet states his exact position by

inserting parenthetical information just after the title, which sheds light on the poem, “the toilet attendant writes home”, the persona of the poem, in his letter to his family, points out that:

Soon, I go turn lawya or dacta,
 But, just now, passage money run out
 So I tek lil wuk-
 I is a Deputy Sanitary Inspecta,
 Big-big office, boy! Tie round me neck!
 Brand new uniform, one big bunch keys!
 If Ma can see me now how she go please...
 (Dabydeen, “Coolie Son” 15-21)

The boy who comes to Britain with the aim of getting an education has been forced to find a job to pay for the expenses of his education. Although the boy works in a manual job, his way of describing his job with an exaggerated language creates an irony in the poem. He considers himself as a big office boy and his wearing a uniform shows that the boy aspires to regain his self-esteem as a respectable individual in the society. However, there is no indication that he has managed to enter a university or college. Significantly, the poem does not make any references to the educational underachievement of the ethnic minorities, or about the students who suffer from negative representation like “being undisciplined and troublesome” (Blackstone 105). However, the poem is significant in its demonstration of an immigrant student who is torn apart between his aspiration to get a proper education and to finance his educational expenses. The poet displays the gradual segregation in British society in terms of providing equal job and education opportunities by unravelling another aspect of racism, that is, the exploitation of the coloured work force and the prevention of equal access to the skilled-jobs. In Tessa Blackstone’s words, “better access to skilled jobs is central in preventing the marginalisation of young people from the ethnic minorities” (109). From this perspective, it can be claimed that the poem is important in its representation of the black people driven to the periphery along with the eventual polarisation between the immigrants and the host communities.

Similar to David Dabydeen who shows the problem of racism as an important social issue by giving specific incidents from the everyday life of black people, faced with

unequal job opportunities and discrimination, Linton Kwesi Johnson also presents racism as the most important problem for the black people whose lives are destroyed by it. Linton Kwesi used his poetry to fight with unlawful discrimination in *Inglan is a Bitch* (1980) which gave him a “solid reputation as a poet and a recording artist” (D’Aguiar, “Why Inglan is a Bitch” 9). Police violence and harassment as an important issue for black immigrants in Britain, is the main concern of the poem “Sonny’s Lettah” in this volume, written in the form of a letter of a son to his mother from a prison cell. He recounts being beaten by three policemen while waiting at a bus stop together with his brother Jim:

Mama,
I really doan know how fi tell y’u dis,
cause I did mek a salim pramis
fi tek care a lickle Jim
an’ try mi bes’ fi look out fi him.

Mama,
Ah reall did try mi bes’,
But non-di-les’,
Mi sorry fi tell y’u seh
Poor lickle Jim get arres’.
(Johnson, “Sonny’s Lettah” 6-15)

Sonny in his letter to his mother depicts the social and political context of the 1970s Britain where black people who were branded as criminals found it almost impossible to live in. Sonny expresses his vulnerable situation in which he becomes the object of cruel surveillance by the police. Therefore, he states how sorry he is since he could not protect his brother in an apologetic letter he writes to his mother. In the following lines, he mournfully dramatises the incident of his arrest and his brother Jim who are beaten when they resist the police:

Out jump t’ree policeman,
di ‘hole a dem carryin’ batan.
Dem waak straight up to mi an’ Jim
One a dem hol’ an to Jim
Seh him tekin him in;
Jim tell him fi let goh a him
Far him noh dhu not’n’
.....
Mama,
More policemen come dung

An' beat mi to dig grung;
 Dem charge Jim fi sus;
 Dem charge mi fi murdah.
 (Johnson, "Sonny's Lettah" 24-30, 60-64)

The policemen's attempt at arresting Jim results in Jim's resistance but this makes the situation worse because he is beaten terribly by the police. With a struggle to defend his brother, Sonny pokes one of the policemen in the eye and the policeman who receives a blow from Sonny falls down and hits his head and dies. Sonny and Jim are eventually arrested; Jim is charged with SUS law which is the abbreviated form of suspicion law (Dawson 62), and Sonny with murder. According to Ashley Dawson, the legal subjectivity and the eventual criminalisation of black people is the outcome of the SUS laws:

...sus laws that allowed police to arrest those they suspected of criminal intent without any evidence, the police force became an increasingly aggressive presence in the decaying urban areas where blacks had been forced to settle during the postwar period. Tensions inevitably escalated between the police and black communities, providing greater justification for the ideology of 'law and order' in official eyes... Black youths in particular could not walk openly on the streets of British cities without courting arbitrary arrest. (62)

In this regard, the poem illustrates the oppressive impact of racism which is institutionalised within the police force, and a judicial system which fosters the surge of violence against blacks instead of providing protection and security for the weak. Hence, the main focus of the poem is the treatment of black minorities in the criminal justice process as suspects and lawbreakers. Furthermore, it is a striking aspect of the poem that the victims of police attacks do not passively accept the unjust treatment. Additionally, depicting the victimisation of the black people by the British laws and justice system, Johnson subverts a strongly established ideology according to which blacks are perceived as a threat to the unity, security, and harmony of British way of life. The expression of that intensity of radical ideas with a direct and militant tone seems to be the major preoccupation of the poet. Johnson takes the role of a spokesman for the black people depicting them as alienated from British. Johnson's poem presents a challenge to the racist ideology of the 1970s and the 1980s and successfully

demonstrates how black communities have to cope with racism, criminalisation and the other accusations of the white society.

In contrast to Johnson's extremely belligerent attitude in his presentation of racism, Fred D'Aguiar's softened and notably humorous expression of the same issue of police brutality against the black population is especially important. "A Gift of Rose" published in *British Subjects* constitutes an important example in terms of its ironic attitude to police brutality:

Two policemen (I remember there were at least two)
 Stopped me and gave me a bunch of red, red roses.
 I nursed them with ice and water mixed with soluble aspirin.
 The roses had an instant bloom attracting stares
 And children who pointed; toddlers cried and ran.
 (D'Aguiar, "A Gift of Rose" 1-5)

The metaphoric use of rose imagery is significant in this poem because the persona is harshly beaten by the police but he never loses his optimism and describes it as a special gift that he receives from the police. The bruises on his face are like the blooming of the flowers which makes him happy. The poet ironically uses a positive image of flower and gift giving to imply a horrific deed of violence. The poem presents the issue of SUS laws which authorise the police to stop and arrest any black person whom they suspect as it is tragically depicted in Johnson's "Sonny's Lettah". Unlike Johnson who propagates the necessity of taking action against police brutality, Fred D'Aguiar transmits the mutual hatred between the police and the black youth as an exposure of mutual love which is expressed by giving a gift of rose. Further in the poem, the poet explains the reason of his being beaten by the police as follows:

This is not the season for roses everyone said,
 You must have done something to procure them.
 I argued I was simply flashed down and the roses
 Liberally spread over my face and body to epithets
 Sworn by the police in praise of my black skin and mother.
 (D'Aguiar, "A Gift of Rose" 6-10)

The ironic tone of the poem is further conveyed in the above quotation when the police praise the black skin of the persona and his mother. The persona speaks quite

optimistically and with an open hearted naivety but the implicit irony and criticism of the poet underlying the poem do not escape the attention of readers. Explicitly enough, these roses stand for the blood and the wounds on his body caused by the beating of the police. Furthermore, the praise of his black skin ironically reveals curses and obscenities shouted at him. The culpability of being black and the stigmatisation of the blacks as the potential criminals are revealed in this poem. The poem also shows that the persistence of discriminatory processes within the institution of the police system fosters the perpetuation of inequality among the people of British society. As the poem clearly shows, the institutionalisation of racism within police institutions causes the victimisation of the black population and their marginalisation. Discrimination and inequality in the society as outcomes of racism which takes back the rights of the black population to pursue their life in security are explicitly demonstrated in “A Gift of Rose”. As the persona indicates, he is not only exposed to physical violence but also verbal violence by the two policemen who swear at him and humiliate him because of his blackness. However, the act of physical violence is presented by the poet as a gift of roses and the verbal violence as a praise of his skin.

Similar to D’Aguiar who deals with the issue of police violence in contemporary Britain, Linton Kwesi Johnson also deals with the problem of racial discrimination in British society. Britain, depicted as a country where hostility resulting from the process of immigration remains as strikingly evident characteristics in Johnson’s “Inglan is a Bitch”, a poem published in *Inglan is a Bitch* where the poet brings forth the problem of hard working conditions of black workers in Britain. The poem delineates a false assumption about Britain as a country of “liberal openness”, and a country of opportunities where immigrants and refugees can “flourish and develop their potential” (Holmes 223). The problem of racial discrimination and its impact on unemployment is the prevailing idea in this poem. At the beginning of the poem, the poet gives voice to the difficulties that the immigrants face when they first come to Britain:

W’en mi jus’come to Landan toun
 mi use to work pan di andahgroun
 but workin’ pan di andahgroun
 y’u don’t get fi know your way aroun’.
 (Johnson, “Inglan is a Bitch” 1-4)

The political alienation and the economic disadvantages imposed upon immigrants compel most of the immigrants to work in low skilled jobs. The persona in this poem records the frustration of his failed hopes of finding a job in Britain when he is confronted with a lack of opportunities and a general sense of alienation which forces him to work in the Underground. He can find only manual jobs unwanted by the English people. Although he lives in London, he does not have the opportunity to know the city where he lives. It is quite significant that he is accused of not being integrated to the British society but it is impossible for him to be integrated to the British society since he is forced to work in the Underground. His difficulty is especially underlined in the fourth line. In the following lines of the poem, the persona states that “mi get a lickle jab in a big ‘otell / an’ awftah a while, mi woz doin’ quite well (Johnson, “Inglan is a Bitch” 10-11). Although he thinks himself to be fortunate enough to find a job for survival in Britain, he will soon learn that he will have to face other problems:

Well mi dhu day wok an’ mi dhu nite wok
 Mi dhu clean wok an’ mi dhu dutty wok
 Dem seh dat black man is very lazy
 But if y’u si how how mi wok y’u woulda sey mi crazy.
 (Johnson, “Inglan is a Bitch” 33-36)

The persona complains about the fact that although he works very hard to fulfil his duties appropriately, he cannot escape from being identified as being lazy. The repetition of the words “mi dhu” and “wuk” are especially important to create a conflict in the poem. Repeated words of “mi dhu” and “wuk” emphasise the hard working conditions of the persona however, he is still accused of being lazy and in this way, a contrastive image of difference between the appearance and the reality is created. Although he seems to be doing nothing according to the stereotypical representations, he is in fact, working very hard to prove himself. Discriminatory practices in employment, which are questioned in this poem, reinforce prejudiced attitudes towards the black workers. The persona’s resentment at being stereotyped as lazy causes him to utter words such as: “Inglan is a bitch / y’u bettah face up to it” (Johnson, “Inglan is a Bitch” 39-40). In addition to the lack of job opportunities, unequal working conditions is another problem that awaits black workers when they come to Britain. In the following lines, the poet highlights the problem of redundancy:

mi know dem have work, work in abundant
 yet still, dem mek mi redundant
 now, at fifty-five mi gettin' quite ol'
 yet still, dem sen' mi fi goh draw dole.
 (Johnson, "Inglan is a Bitch" 49-52)

Racial discrimination in the labour market is displayed in this poem in which the persona is made redundant after working for years. He is quite aware of the injustice done to him and feels sorry to express that he is obliged to take the "dole" ("Inglan is a Bitch" 52). As Tariq Modood states:

The most common view expressed of Caribbean workers was that they were lazy, happy-go-lucky, or slow; while the most common view of Asians was that they were hard workers.... In the last decade or so, it has increasingly been argued that contemporary racism cannot be understood in terms of an undifferentiated colour-racism, but that additionally groups are racialised, and praised or condemned, on the basis of alleged cultural traits rather than any kind of biology.... (69)

In the light of Modood's argument, the belief that there are inherent differences between human beings which shape natural physical, moral and cultural characteristics can be explained, to a large extent, by racism which designates one racial group as hierarchically inferior to the other. Within the context of "Inglan is a Bitch", attributing negative characteristics to the working capacity of a black worker leads the persona to frustration. However hard he works he cannot escape from being stereotyped as a lazy worker. His being set aside as a designated member of a race creates segregation and discrimination in the society which can be clearly seen as a concrete manifestation of racism.

In addition to the problem of police brutality and attack depicted in "Sonny's Lettah" and the issue of the discrimination in employment displayed in "Inglan is a Bitch", "New Craas Massahkah" published in Johnson's *Tings and Times*, also illustrates racial violence, in this case, by giving an example of a specific incident where fourteen young people aged sixteen and fifteen died in a fire which broke out at a birthday party in New Cross Southeast London, on 18 January 1981 (Howe 1). The event is believed to be a racist attack where a firebomb was thrown through the window, but no specific results

could be found in police investigations (Howe 1). The use of the word massacre to describe this event needs special attention because massacre is usually used for the mass destruction of a group of people. The poet specifically uses massacre to describe this event to emphasise the idea that the racist ideology is the most important motive for this violence. “Commemorating the firebombing of fourteen party-going teens”, the poet deals with the New Cross Massacre in this poem (Eldridge 39). Johnson highlights the black experience of racial violence which can even cause the death of innocent children:

wi did know seh it coulda appn
 yu know- anytime, anywhey
 far don't it appn to wi
 an di Asians dem a'ready?
 but in spite a all dat
 evrybody woz still shack
 wen wi get di cole facks
 bout that brutal attack
 wen wi fine out bout di fyah ovah New Craas
 bout di innocent lif dem laaas...
 (Johnson, “New Craas Massahkah” 19-28)

The poet emphasises the fact that the New Cross Massacre is an extraordinary shocking event which shows that racial violence is a part of everyday life of black and coloured people. The tragic incident of the New Cross Massacre explicitly showed the existing prejudices between different races. The presence of the black population is conceived as a threat to the British society, and thus, black people are marginalised and excluded from the society. The inevitable outcome of this polarisation and the arousal of tension between different groups is the exercise of criminal violence. In the following lines, the poet successfully brings together the joyful atmosphere of the birthday party and the terror of the fire, and forming a shocking contrast, in this way he recreates the tragic incident in his poem:

First di laafing
 an di taakin
 an di stylin in di pawty

 di movin
 an a grooving
 an a dancing to di disco

 Den di panic

an di pushin
an di borin through dif yah

di runnin
an di jumpin
an di flames dem risin highah

di weepin
an di moanin
o di harrow af di fyah.
(Johnson, "New Craas Massahkah" 58-63, 67-75)

Almost all parts of the poem consist of short lines including gerunds like "laafing, taakin, stylin, movin, groovin and dancing. The use of gerunds, without forming long sentences can be considered as an implication of the short life of these children who are killed at the beginning of their life. Additionally, while in the first two stanzas, the gerunds are used to describe the party, socialisation, joy and happiness, in the following stanzas of the poem gerunds are used to describe disaster and moaning. In the first two stanzas, the poet gives a brief sketch of the joyful time that teenagers spend in their birthday party and the last three stanzas present an abrupt shift from a state of entertainment to a state of terror and fear. The laughing, talking and dancing of teenagers are immediately replaced by the panic, weeping and moaning. The poet depicts a horrific and violent event realistically, bewailing the death of the innocent teenagers.

The failure of British police and justice system to provide security and order for its citizens is the prevailing idea of the poem which recounts how black people are constituted and presented as a target for racist attacks. From this perspective, the poet successfully allows people to speak for themselves, and thus, undermines the ideology that black presence in Britain constitutes a threat for the coherence and national identity of the British people who are unsettled by the criminal activities of black people.

Johnson underlines the fact that the British police system remains unable to find the offenders who are responsible for the death of fourteen teenagers, and cannot answer the questions of "who tun dat nite af joy into a mawnin af sarrow / who tun di jallity into a

ugly trajedy!” (Johnson, “New Craas Massahkah” 114-115). The poet goes further in his claims and points out that:

insteade raisin di alaam
mek di public know wha gwaan
plenty paypah print pure lie
fi bline joe public eye
and di police dem plat an scheme
canfuse an canceal.
(Johnson, “New Craas Massahkah” 97-102)

As it is stated in this quotation, far from solving the murder, and carrying out its lawful duties, the police institution itself covers up the events and consciously leaves the investigation ambiguous. Additionally, the power of the media is also emphasised in the poem, which shows it as playing a significant role in accentuating the stereotypes of the black people as members of criminal subcultures. In addition to the stereotypes, they are also biased and do not give an objective presentation of events. John Solomos comments on the construction of stereotypes about the criminality of black people, an ideology which is supported by the media:

Commonly-held images of black people include assumptions about differences between the culture, attitudes and values of black people compared with the white majority. Additionally, the attempts by black groups to assert their rights and lay claim to social justice have often been presented in the media as a sign of the failure of the minority communities to adapt to British society, and not as a sign that racial injustice is deeply embedded. (*Race and Racism in Britain* 185)

As it is displayed above, black people’s claim for equal rights is not interpreted by the media as the black people’s reaction to racial injustice but on the contrary, it is perceived as the inability of black population to adapt to British society. Therefore, the ideology that black people are incapable of conforming to the rules of British society is a false ideology constructed by the media to conceal the racial discrimination and injustice in the British society. It is not difficult to perceive the situation of the black people who constitute the social group of the inner city areas which suffer from poverty, unemployment, racial disadvantage, inequality and discrimination, and who are further pushed into the periphery caused by the negative public opinion constructed by political discourse and the media. In this regard, Johnson draws a realistic picture of the multiple

deprivations of the black people who try hard to survive in a hostile environment: “wat a terrible price wi haffi pay dough, mah / jus fi live a lickle life / jus fi struggle fi suvvive (Johnson, “New Craas Massahkah” 77-79).

In their depiction of racism, each poet adopts a unique style with a focus on various aspects of racism. First of all, David Dabydeen distinguishes himself among the other two poets with his vivid description and distinction between the male experience of racism and the female experience of racism. While sexuality becomes a way of exploitation and torture for the slave women, it turns out to be a fantasy of the male slaves about the white women whom they think are unreachable. While Dabydeen specifically concentrates on colonial racism and the daily experiences of the slaves in the plantation societies perceived in *Slave Song* and *Turner*, Linton Kwesi Johnson mainly deals with the contemporary forms of racism in the 1970s and the 1980s, connecting it to the problem of immigration. In this manner he is similar to Fred D’Aguiar who is also concerned, to a great extent, with the discrimination and exploitation of the black population living in Britain. These two poets, however, differ in their method of handling the issue of racism in Britain during the 1970s and the 1980s in the way that, while Johnson adopts a militant style using his poetry as a propaganda device to call black people to take action against racism as seen in *Voices of the Living and the Dead*, Fred D’Aguiar adopts a subtle and ironic style in his demonstration of racism by implementing an ironically humorous perspective to the tragic facet of racism. As a result, these three poets together show how racism operates within the everyday structure of plantation societies as well as the present day society of immigrant communities in Britain. Hence, they decipher the ambivalent infrastructure of racial formations which assume different shapes in different circumstances by bringing together the past experiences of slavery and the contemporary formations of racism in Britain, and in this way prove that the colonial ideology and racism implanted within it did not come to an end and continued to survive in the 1970s and the 1980s assuming different shapes. Subsequently, it may further be argued that their poetry represents the revival of a racial consciousness and the reclaim of blackness as part of black cultural identity. Considering James Berry’s statement that an “Afro-Caribbean heritage makes undeniable demands” (xxv), it can be claimed that the poetry of these

poets undertakes the task of recovering the Afro-Caribbean heritage which is deeply rooted in the days of slavery, and fight against racism by creating a racial consciousness.

CHAPTER II

Fighting Racism and the Construction of Afro-Caribbean Cultural Identity in the Poetry of Linton Kwesi Johnson, David Dabydeen and Fred D'Aguiar

Johnson, Dabydeen and D'Aguiar are not only concerned with displaying various aspects of racism and posing it as a serious issue. They go further than merely discussing the problems, they offer solutions to these problems. The common characteristic that is observed in their poetry is their struggle to construct a black cultural identity. In order to erase the effects of the ideological justifications of racism which refuses to recognise the blacks as human beings, it is seen necessary by these poets to develop a unique black and coloured identity which will restore the self-esteem and dignity lost under racism. Instead of emphasising the sameness, Johnson, Dabydeen and Fred D'Aguiar emphasise the concept of difference with the aim of preventing black people from feeling ashamed of their difference. For this reason, the concept of slavery constitutes the basic ingredient of black colonial identity. Evoking awareness for black cultural identity, Johnson, Dabydeen and D'Aguiar share the same notion of identity which combines three different elements: the heritage of African cultural elements before blacks were transported to the Caribbean islands, experiences of slavery in the Caribbean islands and the immigrant experiences in Britain. The formation of an identity which does not depend on a long historical heritage might be a weak and rootless identity, vulnerable to outside impositions and oppressions. Carmichael and Hamilton state:

Our basic need is to reclaim our history and our identity from what must be called cultural terrorism, from the depredation of self-justifying white guilt. We shall have to struggle for the right to create our own terms through which to define ourselves and our relationship to the society, and to have these terms recognised. This is the first necessity of a free people, and the first right that any oppressor must suspend. (34-35)

The primary requirement of overcoming oppression and gaining freedom, for Carmichael and Hamilton, is to form an identity and reclaim black history. Without these, black people are doomed to be assimilated into the dominant white culture which Carmichael and Hamilton call as “cultural terrorism” (34). However, it is not an easy process to “articulate the power of powerless” for the black and coloured people who have been exposed to centuries of exclusionary treatment (Adam and Moodley 250). In an environment of institutionally established overtly racist practices, black people are inescapably filled with feelings of guilt and self-hatred, and accept their oppression as legitimate. Once they become aware of the fact that they can never unfetter the stereotypical representations, the blacks begin to perceive the necessity of implementing an intense consciousness about their race. Oppression cannot be overcome through assimilation into the dominant culture, but through the creation of “racial solidarity and collective identity” to challenge the racialised form of identity imposed on them (Goldberg and Solomos 7). As Carmichael and Hamilton state, reclaiming history and identity is thought to be the first essential requirement which gives individuals the security of belonging to a community, and sharing the common cultural patterns of creating meanings out of it. Educating the people of colour will help them gradually recognise that they can successfully challenge the foundations of racism, and ensure self-confidence of the oppressed so that they can feel empowered. Considering culture as an inseparable component of history, Amilcar Cabral underlines the fact that “the foundation for national liberation rests in the inalienable right of every people to have their own history” (54). National liberation, for him, should incorporate traditional cultural elements of the society which does not pursue the privilege of merely one social group (54). For this reason, as he states, black people should “have a clear idea of the value of culture in the framework of the struggle and must have a thorough knowledge of the people’s culture, whatever may be their level of economic development” (56). Amilcar Cabral states that:

History teaches us that, in certain circumstances, it is very easy for the foreigner to impose his domination on a people. But it also teaches us that, whatever may be the material aspects of domination, it can be maintained only by the permanent, organised repression of the cultural life of the people concerned... In fact, to take up arms to dominate a people is, above all, to take up arms to destroy, or at least to neutralise, to paralyse, its cultural life. For, with a strong

indigenous cultural life, foreign domination cannot be sure of its perpetuation.
(52)

Central to Cabral's argument is the necessity of constructing a collective black identity which is based on a common history so that the blacks recognise themselves through a recollection of a common past. Therefore, it is crucial to form a distinct racial identity acquired through racial consciousness in relation to a positive self-concept and self-esteem. The re-formation of racial identity opens a process through which the individuals will be able to ascend from a stage of self-contempt into a stage of self-confidence. According to Castells, reacting against an imposed identity introduced by the dominant institutions to naturalise and maintain their domination, the black population in the United Kingdom contribute to the creation of a "resistance identity" generated by those who are "stigmatised by the logic of domination, thus, building trenches of resistance and survival on the basis of principles different from, or opposed to, those permeating the institutions of society" (89). The resistance identity endeavours to affirm the cultural production of the people of the African diaspora who no longer feel guilty of their blackness. Rather than attempting to negate blackness in order to erase the feelings of non-belonging and uprooting, black people are encouraged to feel proud of their difference with an awakening to their cultural and historical difference. Manuel Castells describes the building of a defensive identity in opposition to the dominant ideology as the "exclusion of excluders by the excluded" and states:

Identity for resistance leads to the formation of communes or communities. It constructs forms of collective resistance against otherwise unbearable oppression, usually on the basis of identities that were, apparently, clearly defined by history, geography, or biology, making it easier to essentialize the boundaries of resistance. (9)

The creation of a particular lived experience of blackness which would construct feelings of solidarity between the different groups of blacks to diminish the sense of estrangement caused by racism can be considered to be the primary aim of the resistance identity leading to the awakening of consciousness.

In addition to the special emphasis on the necessity of the revival of Afro-Caribbean roots which is indispensable for the formation of black cultural identity, the issue of

language also needs special attention in terms of its contribution to the formation of a distinct black cultural identity. Considering language as the “carrier of culture”, Ngugi Wa Thiong’o focuses on the colonialist imposition of the English language as the most effective medium of controlling the minds of the colonised people (13). Colonialism, for Wa Thiong’o, takes its most influential supremacy through mental domination:

Colonialism imposes its control of the social production of wealth through military conquest and subsequent political dictatorship. But its most important area of domination was the mental universe of the colonised, the control through the culture, of how people perceived and their relationship to the world. Economic and political control can never be complete or effective without mental control. To control a people’s culture is to control their tools of self-definition in relationship to others. (16)

The mental colonisation of the black people involves attributing negative qualities of “backwardness, underdevelopment, humiliation and punishment” to them (Wa Thiong’o 28). In other words, “the domination of a people’s language by the languages of the colonising nations was crucial to the domination of the mental universe of the colonised” (Wa Thiong’o 16). In their attempt to construct a unique black identity, Linton Kwesi Johnson, David Dabydeen and Fred D’Aguiar incorporate the functional use of language to subvert the dominant ideology about the inferiority of blacks, which is carried through the English language. Refusing to use standard English which imposes colonial discourse on the minds of people, the black poets as a political choice specifically use a distorted form of English which is called “Patois, or Creole” (Habekost 63), and “nation language” by Edward Brathwaite (309). Instead of perceiving Creole as a dialect of English, though it is based on the English language, Brathwaite prefers to consider it as a unique language because the language is used strategically as a subversive element to undermine the dominant power of Standard English (309). Creole language is defined by Andee Mullins as:

... a language or way of speaking that comes into existence when two or more different languages come into contact and a new simplified way of speaking is adapted, usually by a group, so there is better understanding and communication between the groups. The Creolized form of the language often adapts a different syntax, and a different pronunciation of words which is quite different than the language or languages from which it is derived. As seen in the definition of the word Creole, Creole is not limited to English. Creole could be used to define any two or more foreign languages which when combined result in a creolized way of speaking. (1)

Stuart Hall, on the other hand, perceives the use of Creole as an important step in the creation of cultural identity since it marks the beginning of a cultural revolution:

To encounter people who can speak with one another in exactly that transformation of standard English which is patois, which is creole - the hundreds of different creole and semi-creole languages which cover the face of the Caribbean in one place or another - that these have become as it were the languages in which important things can be said, in which important aspirations and hopes can be formulated, in which an important grasp of the histories that have made these places can be written down, in which artists are willing for the first time, the first generation, to practice and so on, that is what I call a cultural revolution. (Hall, "Negotiating Caribbean Identities" 290)

As Hall states, black people for the first time, see the power in themselves to build their cultural identities by taking up the power of using the marginal language of Creole to express their marginalised experiences. The appropriation of the English language to form a resistant black identity results in the creation of a language which is marginal and oppositional, in Brathwaite's words; it is a language "like a howl, or a shout or a machine-gun or the wind or a wave" (311). Brathwaite coins the nation language and further describes it as follows:

Nation language is the language which is influenced very strongly by the African model, the African aspect of our New World/Caribbean heritage. English it may be in terms of some of its lexical features. But in its contours, its rhythm and timbre, its sound explosions, it is not English, even though the words, as you hear them, might be English to a greater or lesser degree... First of all, it is from, as I've said, an oral tradition. The poetry, the culture itself, exists not in a dictionary but in the tradition of the spoken word. It is based as much on sound as it is on song. (311)

Tracing back its origins to the times of slavery and the plantations, the nation language is used specifically for the transmission of the past experiences of the periods of racial exploitation during slavery to the present generations of black people in Britain who continue to live in subordinate positions. Apart from its functional use in keeping alive the past experiences of colonial exploitation, nation language is also perceived as a medium for the revival of the roots of the Afro-Caribbean historical and cultural identity, and thus, to prevent the formation of a generation of black British society with no roots (Braithwaite 311). Hence, the conscious use of the nation language which is a precondition for the construction of black cultural identity can be considered as a further

decisive element in restoring black people's self-esteem that has been distorted under colonial exploitation. Using a language which the mainstream of the society find difficult to understand provides black people with space where they can avoid the white imperial ideology. It is this space that gives them the opportunity to reclaim their past which is characterised by pain and suffering. Likewise, to keep the memory of pain and suffering of the past alive in the minds of the young generation of blacks, the use of Creole is an efficient way of struggling against forgetting the past. Bell Hooks argues that:

Language is a place of struggle. We are wedded in language, have our being in words. Language is also a place of struggle. Dare I speak to oppressed and oppressor in the same voice? Dare I speak to you in a language that will move beyond the boundaries of domination—a language that will not bind you, fence you in, or hold you? Language is also a place of struggle. The oppressed struggle in language to recover ourselves, to reconcile, to reunite, to renew. Our words are not without meaning, they are an action, a resistance. Language is also a place of struggle. (146)

It can be claimed that Linton Kwesi Johnson, David Dabydeen and Fred D'Aguiar in their poetry try to construct a collective black identity. Hence, the aim of creating a unifying identity which embodies various internal cultural differences can be clearly observed in the poetry of these poets who all prefer to use Creole, as the best medium of expressing black cultural experience, and in this way, they succeed in finding a bridge connecting the past days of slavery with the present day experiences of immigrants.

The black people's struggle to recover their past by excavating it to re-evaluate the relationship between the slave and the master, and thus, to restore the distorted self-dignity of black man can be observed in Dabydeen's *Slave Song*. The expression of the self-contempt of the black people is constantly pinpointed in Dabydeen's *Slave Song* which discloses the feelings of inferiority in slaves. The poem "Love Song" in *Slave Song*, in this perspective, displays the self-hatred of the black slave of his blackness in the face of the purity of the whiteness of the white woman:

Moon-eye
Blue like blue-saki wing,
Moon-eye, all maan in me mine...

Black man cover wid estate ash
 E ead haad an dry like calabash,
 Dut in e nose-hole, in e ear-hole,
 Dut in e soul, in e battie-hole.
 (Dabydeen, "Love Song" ll. 1-7)

Moon-eye
 Blue like blue-saki wing
 Moon-eye, all morning in my mind.

Black man covered with estate-ash
 His head hard and dry like calabash
 Dirt in his nostrils, in his ears
 Dirt in his soul, in his anus.
 (Dabydeen, "Love Song" 52)

While he is dreaming of the beauty and purity of the white girl, the cane-cutter slave feels despair when he remembers his blackness and filthiness. His admiration for the white woman can be observed in his description of the white woman whose eyes are resembled to the sparkling of the moon. He perceives himself as physically deprived not only due to his black skin which is further stained by the filth of cane smeared all over his body, but also due to the blackness of his soul which, he thinks, leads him to suffer the pain of self-disgust. In this way, Dabydeen attracts the attention of his readers to the fact that there must be an urgent effort to raise black consciousness in order to elevate black people, who are ashamed of their black identity, to the level of humanity. In the same manner, Fred D'Aguiar's "Colour" is an important poem displaying the psychological damage of a black man who is afraid of his blackness:

I woke with the last of my colour on my gums.
 The rest had melted from me and coated the sheets
 Mattress and both pillowcase. I cursed myself
 For sleeping nude as I stood before the mirror.

This pale somebody stared right back and right through me,
 He looked so hard, I had to glance behind myself.
 An involuntary shiver took me over.
 Ghosts after ghost hurdled my grave. I felt the blood

drain from my face. My one thought was, what would I say
 to the cleaner?
 (D'Aguiar, "Colour" 1-10)

What is emphasised in these lines is the nightmare of a man who discovers that his colour stains the sheets, mattress and pillowcase when he wakes up in the morning in a hotel room. The persona blames and is ashamed of himself, internalising the racist stereotypes about his colour which symbolises “evil, demise, chaos, corruption, and uncleanliness, in contrast to whiteness, which equalled order, wealth, purity, goodness, cleanliness, and the epitome of beauty” (Adam and Moodley 250). Although it is not explicitly expressed by the persona who is just worried about how to explain it to the cleaner, the underlying idea of his nightmare is the revelation of his hidden fears about the colour of his skin which is the primary reason of his sense of inferiority.

In an endeavour to overcome the feelings of inferiority as observed in D’Aguiar’s “Colour”, black people’s struggle to be incorporated into the Western society can be explicitly observed in Dabydeen’s “Two Cultures” included in the *Slave Song*. The constitution of the black cultural identity and the concern with the “slave narratives and oral histories from Africa”, with an attempt to provide an insight into the “collective memory” of black people (Quayson and Goldberg xix), find their echoes in “Two Cultures”. The dangerous results of the cultural elimination of the colonised people are openly displayed in a humorous tone in the poem in which the poet visualises an encounter between an old Guyanese peasant and a young Guyanese who has just returned from England:

‘Hear how a baai a taak
Like BBC!
Look how a baai a waak
Like white maan,
Caak-hat pun he head, wrist-watch pun he haan!
Yu dadee na Dabydeen, plant gyaden near Blackbush Pass?
He na cut wid sickle an dig wid faak?
He na sell maaket, plantain an caan?
An a who pickni yo rass?
Well me never see a story like dis since me baan!
(Dabydeen, “Two Cultures” ll. 1-10)

Just listen to the boy talking
Like BBC!
Look how he walks
Like white man
Cork-hat on his head, wrist-watch on his hand!
Isn’t your father called Dabydeen who plants vegetables near Blackbush Pass?
Doesn’t he cut with a sickle and dig with a fork?

Doesn't he sell in the marketplace, plantain and corn?
 Whose child are you then?
 Well I've never seen anything like this since I was born!
 (Dabydeen, "Two Cultures" 65)

The above lines which present both the stupefaction and reproach of an old person about the totally changed behaviour and manner of a young black boy who returns to Guyana can be taken as evidence of the negation of national identity under the colonial ideology. The obliteration of the indigenous culture which is observed in the young black boy is an incident which shows the terrible outcome of the assimilation by the dominant culture which may lead to a denial of self-identity. Amilcar Cabral argues:

A people who free themselves from foreign domination will be free culturally only if, without complexes and without underestimating the importance of positive accretions from the oppressor and other cultures, they return to the upward paths of their own culture, which is nourished by the living reality of its environment, and which negates both harmful influences and any kind of subjection to foreign culture. Thus, it may be seen that if imperialist domination has the vital need to practice cultural oppression, national liberation necessarily is an act of culture. (56)

As it has already been explained by Cabral, it is impossible to liberate a society from the destructive outcome of political, economic and cultural domination unless it ceases to underestimate the value of its own cultural identity, as it is seen in the case of the "Two Cultures". In order not to be marginalised by the mainstream dominant social order, the boy, in the poem, willingly assimilates himself to the British culture in which he aspires to be included. Hence, the first thing he changes is his language - he gives up speaking in Creole and takes up standard English - and then, he changes his outside appearance by wearing "fancy" clothes. The old person develops a critical attitude to the boy and reminds him of his roots with a rebuke. Quite interestingly, in the second part, the poem provides an insight into the old person's conception of his own race which he perceives as inferior to that of the whites:

E bin Ingran two maaning, illegal,
 Eye-up waan-two white hooman,
 Bu is wha dem sweet watalily seed
 Go want do wid hungrybelly Blackbush weed
 Like yu, how yu teet yella like dhall
 An yu tongue black like casrip!

Dem should a spit, vomit pun yu, beat yu rass wid whip!
 Is lungara like yu spoil dem good white people country,
 Choke an rab, bruk-an- enta, tief dem people prapaty!
 (Dabydeen, "Two Cultures" ll. 11-19)

He went to England for a couple of days, illegally
 And he eyed up one or two white women
 But what would those sweet waterlily seeds
 Want to have with a hungry-bellied Blackbush weed
 Like you, how your teeth are yellow like lentils
 And your tongue black like molasses!
 They should have spat, vomited upon you, beat you with whips!
 It's trash like you who spoil those good white people's country
 Mugging and breaking and entering and stealing their property!
 (Dabydeen, "Two Cultures" 65)

In opposition to the black boy's assimilationist attempts to create an identity for himself so that he can belong to the white culture, the old person tries to open the eyes of the black boy to the reality that he will forever remain in servitude regardless of his imitation of Western culture. The black boy's aspiration to speak properly is reminiscent of Homi Bhabha's understanding of mimicry which he defines as "the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, *as a subject of difference that is almost the same, but not quite*" (italics are original) (86). The boy's surrendering himself to Western culture is severely criticised by the persona who continually reminds him of his position. Likewise, the old speaker's comprehension of his own race is also significant. His comparison of the white girls to the sweet water lily seeds and the black boy to the hungry-bellied Blackbush weed quite obviously sheds light upon his sense of black identity, and further, proves that he cannot liberate himself from the colonialist ideology which imposes the feeling of humiliation and the sense of self-disgust on black people so that they will never see themselves as equals to the white race. The old speaker's degradation of his own race continues with a greater intensity with the use of colonial discourse to reprimand the boy who, he thinks, spoils and pollutes the peaceful country of white men. Considering the concept of the persona of the poem, we may refer to Fanon who describes the beginnings of the evolution of national liberation with a particular emphasis on the necessity of shaking people and awakening them to cultural oppression which he defines as "unqualified assimilation", which refers to those people who are soliciting identification with "the culture of occupying power" and whose "inspiration is European" (*The Wretched of the Earth* 178-179).

Additionally, the boy's aspiration for Western culture and his desperate attempt to construct his identity in relation to Western culture stem from the obliteration and suppression of his own culture. A similar proposition is also put forward by Fanon who dwells on the importance of national culture for national liberation, and especially for the liberation of the minds of the black people who are still under the influence of imperial ideology and unable to overcome the feelings of inferiority; Fanon argues that:

...culture is the first expression of a nation, the expression of its preferences, of its taboos and of its patterns. It is at every stage of the whole of the society that other taboos, values and patterns are formed. A national culture is the sum total of all these appraisals; it is the result of internal and external extensions exerted over society as a whole and also at every level of that society. In the colonial situation, culture, which is doubly deprived of the support of the nation and of the state, falls away and dies. The condition for its existence is therefore national liberation and the renaissance of the state. (Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* 196-197)

Similar to Fanon's focus on the necessity of national liberation, Dabydeen's poem, "Homecoming" in *Coolie Odyssey* underlines cultural freedom as an important requirement for the construction of identity. On his return to his hometown in Guyana from Britain, the persona of the poem discovers that in contrast to the struggles of black immigrants in Britain, the people in his hometown are unaware of these struggles, and passively accept their exploitation and continue to suffer in poverty. In the first part of the poem, the poet presents a striking incident which shows the contradiction between the position of native Guyanese people in their own country and the westerners as colonisers:

Only think you'll soon drop,
 Stop sell pavement mango sun-beat-
 Ing-day-long, with all the things you dreamed
 To taste in the tourists' bags,
 How they clearly passing you by like a beggarman

 Especially the long-legged bejewelled women boldly
 Going where roach with sense would hesitate
 In search of genuine native crafts
 In poor people's shops
 By uncharted alleys.
 (Dabydeen, "Homecoming" 1-5, 8-12)

It is in England where the persona gradually builds up an awareness of his racial identity and not in his hometown in Guyana. Being exposed to the practices of discrimination, unequal opportunities and racism, he comes to a point of recognition that the poverty-stricken people of his own town passively accept their semi-servile status without questioning anything. What is highly important is the poet's bringing two different pictures together in which a poor native Guyanese is trying to sell mango on the pavement while the tourists in their luxurious clothes pass by him. In the meantime, the mango-seller does not realise the fact that the tourists to whom he is trying to sell mango are in fact the symbols of the colonisers who, after exhausting the natural resources to meet the needs of the mother country's industry, have left the native people in a state of underdevelopment and poverty. For this reason, the tourists' prosperity and the natives' poverty are juxtaposed in the poem which leads the persona to apprehend the fact that the major cause of the native's poverty is their exploitation both economically and culturally by the colonial power. It may further be argued that the poem proves the fact that instead of appropriating the white colonial culture and developing identification with it, it is necessary for black people to construct their own oppositional black identity with an affirmation of blackness, not in the sense of self-disgust but in the sense of self-pride. Significantly, after an acquisition of racial consciousness, in the last part of the poem, the persona draws attention to the necessity of awakening his nation to the realisation of the infringement of the rights of black people in their own country:

History we greed for in England,
 Must know coolie ship, whip, brown paddy-skins
 Burst, blown far by winds,
 Whilst pearl-white rice feed overseer-mouth:
 England, where it snows but we still born brown,
 That I come back from to here, home,
 As hungry as any white man for native gold
 To plant flag and to map your mind.
 (Dabydeen, "Homecoming" 18-25)

The persona in these lines expresses his determination to plant the seeds of national identity in the minds of the colonised people by reviving the past history of slavery in their imagination. The resignation of the persona about the cultural and economic exploitation of his native people and their ignorance of this fact makes the persona focus

on the words “coolie ship” and “whip” as an evocation of slavery which black history is grounded upon. At this point, it may be necessary to refer to Homi Bhabha who explicitly delineates the trick played by the coloniser on the colonised people to maintain its system of domination:

The objective of colonial discourse is to construe the colonised as a population of degenerate types on the basis of racial origin, in order to justify conquest and to establish systems of administration and instruction. Despite the play of power within the colonial discourse and the shifting positionalities of its subjects (for example, effects of class, gender, ideology, different social formations, varied systems of colonisation and so on), I am referring to a form of governmentality that in marking out a ‘subject nation’, appropriates, directs and dominates its various spheres of activity. Therefore, despite the ‘play’ in the colonial system which is crucial to its exercise of power, colonial discourse produces the colonised as a social reality which is at once an ‘other’ and yet entirely knowable and visible. (70-71)

In accordance with Bhabha who argues for the function of colonial discourse in implementing the racial ideology of the degeneracy of the colonised people with the aim of justifying the exploitation of colonialism, the persona in the poem becomes an eyewitness of how his native country has been economically destroyed, culturally dismantled and historically exterminated. The poem further unravels the true face of slavery which provides a profit for the coloniser while it victimises the natives. Quite strikingly, in lines 19 and 20, Dabydeen demonstrates the barbarity of the system of slavery with such a statement that the pearl-white rice that the natives cultivate is used to feed the colonisers while the natives’ only nutrition is whipping and humiliation. The last two lines find a striking parallel between the coloniser who comes to the colonies with the aim of imposing the colonial regime by destroying the national identity of those people and the black immigrants who return to their hometown with the aim of reconstructing their national identity, history and culture which are demolished under the colonial rule. In the last two lines, the poet finds a striking correlation between his return and the arrival of British colonial rule in Guyana. To fill the minds of the natives with new ideologies is the common purpose of both the persona and the white man but the end that is pursued is totally different in that while the white man tries to impose the colonial ideology to normalise his domination, the native returns to his hometown to open the minds of his people and raise racial consciousness, and restore the national pride in the natives.

The reconciliation of the black people with their true sense of identity is reaffirmed more fiercely by Linton Kwesi Johnson whose proclamation of black unity against oppression is felt in “All wi Doin is Defendin” published in *Tings an Times*:

doze days
of di truncheon
an doze nites
of melancholy locked in a cell
doze hours of torture touchin hell
doze blows dat caused my heart to swell
were well
numbered
and rare now
at an end. (11-20)

To erase the negative impact of prejudice and discrimination which aim at destroying the individuality of black people, Johnson, in this poem, calls his race to maintain the peculiarities of their identity. The poem marks a turning point in its emphasis on the notion of change and opening a new epoch for black people where they will take up their arms to defend themselves against the tyranny of the racist attacks. Mentioning the days of truncheon and nights of melancholy locked in a cell, the poet makes a specific reference to police brutality and torturing of black people under police custody and in the prison cells. The lines above are the harbinger of the days when black people take active stand to defend their own rights without yielding to oppression. Johnson continues to encourage the black people against the injustices, and emphasises black power:

di Special Patrol
will fall
like a wall force down
or a toun turn to dus
even dow dem think dem bold
wi know dem cold like ice wid fear
and wi is fire!
choose yu weapon dem
quick!
all wi need is bakkles an bricks an sticks
wi hav fist
wi hav feet
wi carry dandamite in wi teeth.
(Johnson, “All wi Doin is Defendin” 36-48)

Although there is an overt implication of a call to fight, the poem also involves a deliberate celebration of a preparation for battle, the poet's perpetual affirmation is that their action is self-defence against the racist attacks of the police force. The propelling of the rebellious spirit in Johnson's poem reveals a salient fact that the clash between the British police and the black people who struggle for social justice rely on the disproportionate use of power; while the British police fight with their fully developed technology, black people use bricks and sticks as their weapons. Additionally, the poet successfully contrasts the cold-bloodedness of the British with the flammable and passionate nature of the blacks. Determination of the black people is resembled to fire whose heat will melt the icy coldness of British police.

The expression of the conditions of the black people whose lives are marked by "ghetto housing, poverty and police and intra-ethnic violence" in Britain (Talvi 1), is further described by Linton Kwesi Johnson. The poet deals with the issue of the anti-racist struggles of black people in another poem, "Youth of Hope" which is dedicated to Johnson's friend Darcus Howe⁹ who is a significant figure in encouraging Black British struggle (Hitchcock 3). The poem, which is published in the *Voices of Living and Dead*, challenges the displacement of black people and cultural erasure by asserting the power of the black people to rebel against oppression:

Bodies black shaping time,
 Heads tight height light,
 Eyes fury flaming hate;
 We young lions, youths of hope;
 We smoke weeds of wrath,
 Twist rhythms of riot,
 Explosive words,
 From blazing blood
 Rooting up the stagnant air.
 (Johnson, "Youth of Hope" 6-14)

The warlike atmosphere of the poem is the poet's call for action in order to liberate the black population who are in the grip of oppression and who are the "descendants of Africans taken by capture and kept in enforced slave labour" for centuries (Berry xii). The domineering feelings of anger, resentment and hate are what motivate the persona

of the poem to take the revenge of minority communities living in Britain. The poem's challenging attitude, implemented with hostility, constitutes the most notable elements of black counter struggle against racial discrimination, evoking for collective action against racial harassment in Britain. The poet's belief in the self-confident young generation of blacks who are going to rescue the black people from oppression, whom he calls "youths of hope", displays a determined stance:

Terror could not stop us;
Oppression cannot move us,
The volcanic strength of the earth
Cannot move us: we were grounded.
We are black blood screaming flesh
Seeking peace for our dead.
We young lions, youths of hope.
(Johnson, "Youth of Hope" 40-46)

Johnson, in this poem, tries to stabilise the presence of black people in the United Kingdom by arguing that they are "grounded" and nothing can move them (43). The above lines are the response to the racist ideologies which cannot tolerate the presence of the black people who are seen as the enemy within. The terror and oppression reflect the social and political upheaval of mid 1970s when the "neofascist National Front (NF)" became a significant influence in creating racial hostility between blacks and whites, and thus, "racial harassment escalated and increasingly homicidal attacks on black and Asian people became a regular aspect of life in Britain's decaying inner cities" (Dawson 60). The poor living conditions of the blacks in the inner city areas can also be seen as an important reason for racial upheavals in those areas as expressed by Neil Corcoran:

...as the repressed history of servitude and oppression meets the contemporary squalor of black urban experience in Thatcherite Britain, with its SUS laws, its riot police, its recrudescence of the explicit racism of the National Front, its endemic mass unemployment, its increasingly Draconian immigration laws. It [contemporary black British Poetry] is a poetry in which England becomes Kwesi Johnson's 'Inglan'. (198)

Evidently, the poem's attitude which seems to be too hostile at first sight, is in fact nothing but self-defence on the part of the black communities. Ashley Dawson presents a critical evaluation of the period as follows:

Antiracist groups that sought to repulse such neofascist incursions were often arrested or attacked by the police, offering a graphic example of the state's fundamental racial bias to anyone in doubt. As a result of the police failure to challenge the National Front's inflammatory tactics, black communities revived the independent self-defense organisations that had sprung up during the 1958 white riots. (61)

The black people, who are deprived of their social and political rights and left vulnerable to the violence of white society as a result of police failure to provide stability, are forced to revive independent self-defence organisations to fight racism. Likewise, the speaker in "Youth of Hope" reacts against the neofascist attacks with an assertion of the black people's power to overcome racist violence. The poem, thus, is an invocation for collective action to form an effective resistance. The defiant resistance and collective action is presented as the only solution to defeat racial domination and terror implemented by white society over the immigrant communities.

The aggressive militant overtone of the poem belongs to Johnson's early years when he was involved in the Black Panther Movement, the motto of which was "black power" to "combat discrimination at the place of work, to combat the mis-education of black youths and black young people" (Ludes 1).

Complementary to Johnson who focuses primarily on the struggles of black immigrants and their claim for national identity, Fred D'Aguiar's "Letter from Mama Dot" included in *Mama Dot*, is based on the idea of racial identity of those who did not immigrate to Britain and preferred to remain in their homeland. The poem is written from the point of view of a grandmother in the form of a letter to her grandson. The poem consists of two parts and in the first part, the grandmother points out the social and economic deterioration in Guyana:

Your letters and parcels take longer
 And longer to reach us. The authorities
 Tamper with them (whoever reads this
 And shouldn't, I hope jumby spit
 In them eye). We are more and more
 Like another South American dictatorship,
 And less and less part of the Caribbean.
 Now that we import rice (rice that used to grow wild!)
 We queue for most things:

Flour, milk, sugar, barley, and fruits
 You can't pick anymore. I join them
 At 5 a.m. for 9 o'clock opening time,
 People are stabbing one another for a place
 And half the queue goes home empty-handed,
 With money that means next to nothing.
 (D'Aguiar, "Letter from Mama Dot" 1-15)

The grandmother's letter depicts the economic, social and cultural deterioration which have shaped black historical experience not only during slavery but also after slavery. The present situation of Guyana which is founded upon the ruins of colonial exploitation is displayed in the poem. Guyana is drained out of its resources, and its people are trying to survive in extreme wretchedness, poverty and misery. The grandmother's comparison of the previous situation of Guyana where rice along with the other foods grew naturally in the environment and the present day situation of Guyana where they have to import them is significant in its demonstration of the paralysing results of colonialism. It is further emphasised that the authorities, instead of dealing with the social problems like unemployment and poverty, turn out to be dictators trying to exert a strict control over people. The grandmother's observations, like her wishing a "jumby spit in dem eye" (D'Aguiar, "Letter from Mama Dot" 4-5), of those who read and control the letters, in fact, pinpoints a crucial understanding of the political subordination of black people as it is argued by Brian L. Moore:

The third facet of the process of subordinating the Creole section in social and economic terms was by hindering the growth of an economically independent peasant and small farming sector as a viable alternative to the plantation system. The very problems which facilitated the intervention of the central government in village affairs and its eventual exercise of absolute control over village administration formed the basis of economic decay of the villages. (118)

As Moore further argues, the emphasis on the poverty of the villagers shows the impact of colonial exploitation which systematically strives to keep ex-colonial countries under subjugated position. Through a grandmother figure, the poet succeeds in shedding an unbiased light on the social and political circumstances of Guyana. In an interview D'Aguiar says:

I've been interested in history, specifically black history, since my first book of poems, *Mama Dot*, about my grandmother in Guyana who is of African descent.

My interest in ancestry beyond those who are alive is really my attempt to fill in the gaps of an eradicated past and to understand history through personality, through people and their experiences rather than by a rehearsal of dates and events. A society is best understood by a study of its treatment of the poor and powerless in it. The seeds for regeneration in society frequently come from the bottom, from the least empowered people as a result of their agitation, hunger and invention, and travels upwards, whereas the decay in that society, a society's decadence, its early signs of death, works its way from the top to the bottom. (Frias 418)

D'Aguiar points out that his grandmother is a historical figure, constructing a bridge between the poet and his past. The grandmother functions like a living memory for the poet who is continuously reminded of the colonial history which sums up the cultural elimination, economic exploitation and political assimilation of the colonised people.

In the second part of the poem, the grandmother's focus shifts from Guyana to Britain, to reflect the hard living conditions of immigrants, and she tries to speculate on the white population's view of the black people who will always remain as aliens. Her feelings of despondency are expressed in the following lines:

You are a traveller to them.
A West Indian working in England;
A Friday, Tonto, or Punkawallah;
Sponging off the state. Our languages remain pidgin, like our *dark, third,*
Underdeveloped, world. I mean, their need
 To see our children cow-eyed, pot-bellied,
 Grouped or alone in photos and naked,
 The light darkened between their thighs.
 And charity's all they give: the cheque,
 Once in a blue moon (when guilt's
 A private monsoon), posted to a remote
 Part of the planet they can't pronounce.
 They'd like to keep us there.
 Not next door, your house propping-up
 Theirs....
 (italics are original)
 (D'Aguiar "Letter from Mama Dot" 1-15)

The grandmother warns her grandson about the crucial fact that, regardless of his attempts to be incorporated into mainstream British society, he will forever remain as an outsider. By referring to the strongly established stereotypes about Afro-Caribbeans who are labelled as "dark, third world, underdeveloped, cow-eyed, pot-bellied and

naked” (4-5), the grandmother underlines an important issue about the fixity of racial identity of black people who are conceptualised as the other to the Western self. It can be argued that British society tries to preserve the difference between the two cultures by keeping black people at a distance. In this respect, Stuart Hall emphasises the notion of difference which is essential to “giving things meaning by assigning them to different positions within a classificatory system” (*Representation* 236). In the same manner, black people are classified in a position of difference and given meanings through representation. Hall formulates the working of representation and claims:

Typical of this racialised regime of representation was the practice of reducing the cultures of black people to Nature, or naturalising ‘difference’. The logic behind naturalisation is simple. If the differences between black and white people are ‘cultural’, then they are open to modification and change. But if they are ‘natural’-as the slave-holders believed-then they are beyond history, permanent and fixed. ‘Naturalisation’ is therefore a representational strategy designed to fix ‘difference’, and thus secure it forever. It is an attempt to halt the inevitable ‘slide’ of meaning, to secure discursive or ideological ‘closure’.
(*Representation* 245)

As Hall argues, the cultural division between black and white is fixed and naturalised through representation. In the poem, the grandmother’s allusion to the desire of westerners to see the black Afro-Caribbean people as “cow-eyed, pot-bellied / Grouped or alone in photos and naked” (D’Aguiar “Letter from Mama Dot” 7-8), can be considered as part of representation of black people. Black people’s difference is naturalised through fixed differences between the British self and the black other. The qualities of being cow-eyed, pot-bellied and naked are indicators of malnutrition, hunger and poverty. In this respect, the representation of blacks as such can be seen as an implication of the desire of the British people to see blacks in a fixed position of poverty and hunger. Moreover, the grandmother in the poem perceives that the reason behind British society’s charity shows its desire to keep blacks at a distance. Therefore, through representation, the racial otherness of the blacks is secured; in Hall’s words, the racial identity of “the primitive” in contrast with “the civilised world” is firmly established and naturalised via representation (*Representation* 239).

In contrast to the Western representation of the black people, the black people are determined to represent themselves and to assert their individual racial identities which

depend on difference. However, they are not ashamed of this difference; on the contrary, the black people continually emphasise their difference with self-reliance and pride in the glories of the Afro-Caribbean. Sharing a fundamental outlook towards the common historical past with the aim of ensuring the articulation of racially conscious and culturally distinct identity in the future is the major preoccupation of Dabydeen's poem in section XXI, in *Turner*. The poem is structured on the prophesy of the Hindu god Manu, who is considered to be the progenitor and administrator of the universe according to Hinduism (Thakura 9). The mysterious prediction of Manu about the future of the black race is expressed as follows:

Two sisters I will make in Manu's memory,
 Lead both to riches and to barrenness,
 One and the same pathway Manu prophesied,
 His voice lowered to a mysterious whisper
 As he told that time future was neither time past
 Nor time present, but a rupture so complete
 That pain and happiness will become one, death
 And freedom, barrenness and riches. He
 Ripped away his jouti necklace without warning,
 The beads rolled from the thread, scattered like
 coloured
 Marbles and we scrambled to gather them...
 (Dabydeen, "XXI" 1-11)

The recurrent image in Manu's prophesy is the "jouti necklace", which is a "chain of pearls", the beads of which are broken and scattered around like marbles (Mackenthun 178). It is also significant that Manu's sense of time articulates an interconnection between the past, present and future, where he sees the amalgamation of happiness and pain, freedom, barrenness and riches at the same time. The scattered beads of the jouti necklace can be interpreted to stand for the shattering of the Hindu tribes as an outcome of their transportation from India to the plantation fields in the Caribbean Guyana. The social and cultural destruction caused by slavery is emphasised in the poem. The influence of slavery on the decline of traditional values, and the gradual obliteration of cultural memory is expressed through the scattering of the beads of the necklace in Manu's prophesy. The destruction of the necklace marks a sharp break in the continuation of a strong sense of community and the communal expression of culture. The image of the jouti necklace is further explained:

Each child clutching an accidental handful
 Where before they hung in a sequence of hues
 Around his neck, the pattern of which only he
 Knew-from his father and those before- to
 preserve.

The jouti lay in different hands, in different
 Colours. We stared bleakly at them and looked
 To Manu for guidance, but he gave no instruction
 Except- and his voice gathered rage and
 unhappiness.

That in the future time each must learn to live
 Beadless in a foreign land; or perish.
 Or each must learn to make a new jouti,
 Arrange them by instinct, imagination, study....
 (Dabydeen, "XXI" 12-23)

Trying to gather the scattered beads of the necklace, the members of the tribe expect Manu to instruct them about the future. Each one of the beads coming together in a row, in harmony with each other reflects the culture of the black people. When the necklace breaks, the culture of the black people is destroyed. The black people are uprooted from their lands to be sold as slaves in different places and then, it becomes impossible for them to preserve their culture. Looking at the scattered beads of the necklace, Manu foretells the future of his tribe and warns them against the danger that they should learn ways of surviving in different lands without having the beads of the necklace. The prophesy of Manu is the foreshadowing of the slave trade and its irreparable damages on black people who are uprooted and forced to live in entirely new geographical regions under colonial rule. Manu's prophesy is: "That in the future time each must learn to live / Beadless in a foreign land; or perish / or each must learn to make a new jouti..." (20-22). The fortune teller does not provide a doomed destiny which is unpreventable for the tribe, he foresees two totally different fates for his tribe which will be determined by the choice of his tribe. The first thing that he perceives necessary is that his tribe must learn to live beadless in a foreign land. When the beads of the necklace are taken for the representation of the cultural and traditional elements of their society, the scattering of the beads can be seen as the foreboding of a great danger of being severed from their roots and losing the authentic cultural forms which bind blacks together. If they cannot succeed in recovering from the injury of being uprooted, it

means that they will be doomed to vanish totally. Moreover, Manu displays an alternative future for his tribe, that is, although the scattered beads of the necklace will never be the same again, they can arrange the beads in a new order and make up a new necklace by using the scattered beads. It is quite interesting that the emphasis of Manu's prophesy reflects the main ideology of black racial consciousness movement which asserts the necessity of constructing a black identity which, in fact, is the only way to restore the unity which was destroyed during slavery. To find a way to stand up against the oppression and exploitation, the necessity of creating new social and cultural artefacts which are based on a strong historical memory is especially underlined in the poem. Hence, it can be claimed that the concept of black identity is not only based on the present day experiences of black people in their new social environment, but also on the historical roots which are perpetually recollected in their memories later. It is required that the construction of a black identity is only possible with the amalgamation of these two.

Likewise, the affirmation of black cultural identity as the primordial instrument of resistance gains more outspoken overtones in Johnson's "Mekkin Histri" included in *Inglan is a Bitch* in which Johnson defines the black struggle as making of black history:

now tell mi someting
 mistah govahment man
 tell mi something

how lang yu really feel
 yu coulda keep wi andah heel
 wen di trute done reveal
 bout how yu grab an steal
 bout how yu mek yu crooked deal
 mek yu crooked deal?
 (Johnson, "Mekkin Histri" 1-9)

The poem begins with a direct challenge of the political structure of Britain because of its fostering of the racist policy. The persona, standing firm against the British government, questions it about the oppression of the black people. Especially the second part of the poem unravels what characterizes the black experience in Britain where immigrants are kept under strict control, in Johnson's words, black people are crushed

under “the heel” of Britain (5). The major criticism in the poem is directed against the political ideologies which are important in marginalising the blacks. Johnson continues to blame the racist policy and its influence in creating hatred against immigrants in Britain:

it is noh mistri
 wi mekkin histri
 it is noh mistri
 wi winnin victri

now tell me someting
 mistah ritewing man
 tell mi someting

how lang yu really feel
 wi woulda grovel an squeal
 wen soh much murdah canceal
 wen wi woun cyaan heal
 wen wi feel di way wi feel
 feel the way wi feel?
 (Johnson, “Mekkin Histri” 38-50)

The poet’s special emphasis on the blacks’ making of history in the refrains refers to the creation of a new black cultural identity constructed and shaped by the black diasporic experiences in Britain. After the immigration of Caribbean, African and Asian people of divergent racial and ethnic backgrounds to Britain, where all these people from different backgrounds share the same experiences of exclusion and discrimination which lead to the feelings of pain, hatred, anger and alienation within the immigrant communities, the notion of blackness becomes what characterises the immigrant experiences no matter which racial background they come from. Hence, Johnson’s statement about making history refers to the rearticulation of a new black identity which embraces people of different races with a strong indication of reaction against oppression, and resistance to exploitation by developing group consciousness and a firm sense of community. Paul Gilroy stresses the importance of community as a precondition for the acquisition of black identity and states that:

The historical memory of progress from slave to citizen actively cultivated in the present from resources provided by the past endows it with an aura of tradition. Community, therefore, signifies not just a distinctive political ideology but a particular set of values and norms in everyday life: mutuality, co-operation, identification and symbiosis. For black Britain, all these are centrally

defined by the need to escape and transform the forms of subordination which bring 'races' into being. ("Urban Social Movements, 'Race' and Community" 414)

The need for an identity which will offer a sense of community, promoting a common interest in the past memories of slavery and colonialism, and thus, the development of historical consciousness among the members of the suppressed group are the key components of Gilroy's argument. Gilroy's sense of community which is more than just a group of people, can also be observed in the poem where Johnson repeatedly stresses the making of history to revive their cultural values, suppressed under a long period of colonialism. Johnson emphasises that as descendents of Afro-Caribbean slaves, they are no longer the victimised instruments in the historical and colonial development of Britain, but, for the first time in history, black people play an active role in creating their own distinctive black cultural identity.

Similarly, Johnson's address to the right-wing politicians is significant because it is the right-wing politicians who are influential in constructing the ideology of black people as the problem group in British society. The impact of this ideology on British society is the increase of the racial conflicts between the British people and the immigrants (Solomos, *Race and Racism in Britain* 143). As a result, it is not an unexpected development that Britain turns out to be a dangerous country where the blacks are in a constant state of insecurity, living in fear of racist attacks by British people. For this reason, Johnson claims that the reason of the unsolved murders of black people is the racist ideology propagated by the conservative policies of extreme right-wing politicians. Equally significant in the poet's question directed at the right-wing politicians is his keen awareness of the indifference of right wing politicians to the suffering of the black people who are exposed to harsh racist treatment in British society.

The issue of black cultural identity, based on the destruction of established stereotypes, presents itself as one of the most serious problems in the definition and defence of black identity in Johnson's "Reality Poem" in *Inglan is a Bitch*. The poem begins with an

expression of self-criticism on the part of black people who lose themselves in their past and ignore the present:

dis is di age of reality
 but some a wi a deal wid mitalagy
 dis is di age of science an' teknalagy
 but some a wi a check fi antiquity

w'en wi can't face reality
 wi leggo wi clarity
 some latch aan to vanity
 some hol' insanity
 some get vision
 start preach religion
 but dem can't mek decishan
 w'en it come to wi fite
 dem can't mek decishan
 w'en it comes to wi rites.
 (Johnson, "Reality Poem" 1-14)

In these lines there is a criticism of people who, instead of fighting for their rights, prefer to occupy themselves with things which will keep them in a passive situation. Johnson reminds the people of his own race that they live in an age of science and reality, and they should not waste their time with mysticism of religion. Although it is not stated explicitly, there is a criticism of Rastafarianism in this poem. Rastafarianism is an important religious and philosophical organisation of the black people who aspire to return to Africa of the fifteenth and sixteenth century waiting to "roll back across the Atlantic and rediscover it in its tribal purity" (Hall, "Negotiating Caribbean Identities" 289). King describes Rastafarianism as "politically passive, and nonviolent" and states that "most Rastafarians were committed only to repatriating members to Africa and to worshipping the divinity of Haile Selassie" (10). Therefore, discourse and rituals of Rastafarianism create a utopic idea of a promised land which has no relation with the present day situation of Africa which, as Hall expresses, is "grappling with the problems of Aids and underdevelopment and mounting debt. It is trying to feed its people, it is trying to understand what democracy means against the background of a colonial regime..." (Hall, "Negotiating Caribbean Identities" 289). Attacking the religious implications of the movement, Johnson associates Rastafarianism with religion, mysticism and mythology which are the instruments for keeping people away from the reality. In an interview, Johnson clarifies his ideas about Rastafarianism: "I identified a

lot with Rastafarian ideas... I didn't identify with the Back-to-Africa bit, neither did I identify with Selassie being God, but all the rest of it I could deal with" (Caesar 68). Similarly, in the poem, Johnson criticises the religious aspect of Rastafarianism which he thinks diverts people's attention from taking active steps to defend their rights and persuades them to escape into indolence of religion which teaches them to passively accept their situation without raising their voice against injustice and inequality. Johnson tries to awake his people to the present day realities, and asks them to fight for their rights and to retain their identity, and above all, to become conscious of their own race. The poem finishes with the poet's affirming the necessity of rational thinking:

dis is di age af decishan
 soh mek wi leggo relijan
 dis is di age af decishan
 soh mek wi leggo divishan
 dis is di age af reality
 soh mek wi leggo mitalagy
 dis is di age af science an' teknalagy
 soh mek wi hol' di clarity
 mek wi hol' di clarity
 mek wi hol' the clarity.
 (Johnson, "Reality Poem" 34-43)

In the last part of the poem, Johnson reinforces his ideas about the necessity of constructing solidarity among the blacks with the aim of building up national identity, and wants his people to stand firm against racism without giving themselves up to division and separation. What Johnson tries to create is a kind of enlightenment for his people who seem to be indoctrinated by religious instructions and its illogical teachings, which, Johnson believes, will keep them away from the realities. He continuously underlines the fact that only after they leave aside superstitious beliefs, can they begin to see their world with more clarity. Johnson's ideas in this poem have close affinity with the political ideology of the Black Panthers whose motto is "freeing all people from all forms of slavery in order that everyman will be his own master" (Newton 125). The Black Panther is described as movement of revolutionary nationalists who define their aims as follows:

We do not believe that it is necessary to go back to the culture of eleventh century Africa. In reality, we must deal with the dynamic present in order to forge a progressive future. We feel no need to retreat to the past, although we

respect our African heritage. The things that are useful in the African heritage we will use to deal with the forces that are working on us today. Those things that are out-dated, that are antique, we will look upon with respect, as a fact of our heritage, but not as the basis for a pattern of behaviour to follow in the present time. (Newton 130)

Johnson condemns the superstitious beliefs of his nation considering them as illogical and retrogressive but Fred D'Aguiar in his poem "Obeah Mama Dot" in *Mama Dot* reveals superstitious beliefs as part of a determining cultural characteristic of Caribbean nations. It is clear that these two poets have different views about how the black cultural identity should be constructed. While Johnson emphasises the necessity of political activism in gaining equal rights with white population, D'Aguiar emphasises the importance of all the folkloric and cultural elements of African tradition. In this respect, the poem "Obeah Mama Dot" deals with the curing of the persona by the sorcery of his grandmother:

She kneads into my belly
Driving the devil
Out of my enforced fast.

For the fevers to subside,
I must drink the bush
Boiled to a green alluvium.
(D'Aguiar, "Obeah Mama Dot" 4-9)

The grandmother tries to heal the sick child suffering from fever by using the methods that she knows best, that is, witchcraft to exorcise the evil spirits in the body of her grandchild. The *obeah* that the poet mentions in the title is a widespread superstitious belief among slaves who use magic as the only power to employ against their masters. Keith Albert Sandiford explains the function of *obeah* as follows:

Widespread among West-Indian slaves, obeah (a term of Ashanti and Fanti origin) was a system of beliefs about the indwelling supernatural powers of the universe; its practitioners (African priests who became obeahmen) and their adherents attempted to harness those powers to confront and combat the presumptive sorcery or powerful magic of white man which had inflicted on them the trauma of forced migration and enslavement. (166)

Therefore, through the practise of *obeah*, the slaves find an opportunity to prove their superiority to the slave masters in the realm of the supernatural. According to Jenny Sharpe, “*obeah* or *obi*, from the perspective of Europeans, was a term of African origin, signifying sorcery or witchcraft and involving the practise of diabolic arts” (3). Thus, while *obeah* is conceived as a diabolic art by the Europeans who consider it as a threat to the authority, it is kept alive throughout the centuries as an integral component of Caribbean culture as it is observed in this poem where *obeah* is associated with possessing knowledge of herbal cures for the diseases. Hence, unlike Johnson who dismisses the superstitions of black people as being irrational, D’Aguiar presents a portrayal of superstitions situating them strongly within the Caribbean cultural legacy.

Johnson, while repudiating the superstitious religious beliefs which, he thinks, functionally make black people unquestionably accept their situation, he does not refrain from expressing his desire for a social change as well as asserting the customs of Afro-Caribbean culture like the carnival tradition in “Forces of Victory” in *Inglan is a Bitch*. The poem is a celebration of the Notting Hill carnival which offers an undeniably crucial opportunity for black people to express their national identity:

wi mek a lickle date
 fi nineteen-seventy-eight
 an’ we fite an’ wi fite
 an’ defeat di State
 den all a wi jus’ forwud
 up to Not’n’ Hill Gate
 den all a wi jus’ forwud
 up to Not’n’ Hill Gate
 (Johnson, “Forces of Victory” 5-12)

The poet’s confrontational attitude in the poem which ascertains the strong affiliation between the Caribbean carnivals and the formation of black community also fosters the Notting Hill Carnival as a stimulator of conflicts between the black community and the British state. Johnson’s militaristic discourse in depicting the celebration of Notting Hill Carnival as if it is a call for the declaration of war on the enemy country goes in parallel with the government’s struggle to “suppress the alarmingly seditious annual festivities” which are perceived to be the catalyst in furthering racial conflicts between the black population and British public (Dawson 57). Being regarded as a threat disrupting social

order, the Notting Hill festival which has become the largest street festival in Europe (Younge 1), plays a highly significant role for the black population of Britain to enact their cultural identity with a celebration of the Caribbean traditions as well as confronting Britain's racist political culture. In addition to this, the Notting Hill carnival has another specific historical function as a commemoration of the racial hostility towards the presence of black people in Britain, and the death of black youths in the 1958 white riots against black people. Alan Travis, the journalist of *The Guardian*, reveals a historical fact in his article:

Senior Metropolitan police officers tried to dismiss the Notting Hill race riots which raged for five nights over the August bank holiday in 1958 as the work of 'ruffians, both coloured and white' hellbent on hooliganism, according to newly released official files. But police eyewitness reports in the secret papers confirm that they were overwhelmingly the work of a white working class mob out to get the 'niggers'. The ferocity of Notting Hill 'racial riots' as the press called them at the time, shocked Britain into realising for the first time that it was not above the kind of racial conflict then being played out in the American deep south. The carnival, which will fill the streets of west London with more than 1.5 million people this weekend, was started in 1959 as a direct response to the riots. (1)

Travis provides an insight into the social and political upheavals created both by the racist ideology and police brutality prevalent during the 1950s and 1960s. Therefore, the development of Notting Hill Carnivals as a cultural response to the "first significant postwar public expressions of racist hostility towards the presence of Britain's nonwhite citizens" constitutes an integral part of Caribbean popular culture, and turns out to be an important symbol of black solidarity and resistance (Dawson 64). The poet, further, emphasises the power of black cultural identity in the refrain of the poem, where he persistently claims that:

we're di forces af vict'ry
 an' wi comin rite through
 we're de forces af vict'ry
 now wat y'u gonna do
 (Johnson, "Forces of Victory" 13-16)

What is considered as a victory is that regardless of the attempts of the British police force to repress the celebrations, the Notting Hill Carnivals continue with the active

participation of black populations challenging every form of imposition. Johnson repeatedly emphasises the power of black resistance in opposition to the British police forces; it is a victory on the part of the black people to keep their traditional customs of resistance to refute the official culture of Britain. Michael Bakhtin comments on the ideological function of carnivals which are not a spectacle seen by people but an “expression of folk consciousness, of folk culture” in which all people participate and take part (6). Bakhtin states that:

As opposed to the official feast, one might say that carnival celebrated temporary liberation from the prevailing truth and from the established order; it marked the suspension of all hierarchical rank, privileges, norms, and prohibitions. Carnival was the true feast of time, the feast of becoming, change, and renewal...the suspension of all hierarchical precedence during carnival time was of particular significance...Rank was especially evident during official feasts; everyone as expected to appear in the full regalia of his calling, rank, and merits and to take the place corresponding to his position. It was a consecration of inequality. On the contrary, all were considered equal during carnival. (10)

In the light of Bakhtin’s conceptualisation of carnival, it can be claimed that Caribbean carnivals are not simply the festivals of entertainment as parts of popular culture, but “highly contested, representational sites of national and regional cultural identities” expressed through the cultural performance of the black people (Aching 3). In this regard, Johnson’s poem also embodies the subversive carnivalesque features in its contestation of social hierarchies and in its emphasis on the necessity of forming an organisational unity among blacks to create a collective expression of black culture.

The cultural significance of carnivals, is also emphasised by Fred’D Aguiar in his poem “Notting Hill”. Unlike Johnson, D’Aguiar does not seem to be explicitly preoccupied with the ideological function of carnivals. He emphasises the thrilling joy, pleasure, and sparkling costumes and disguise associated with carnivals:

car-ni-val car-ni-val car-ni-val
this is car-ni-val

peacocks with feathers of the rainbow
wings’ spread held all day

the robes of kings drag yards behind
heads-above-their-own crowns sway. (D’Aguiar, “Notting Hill” 1-6)

The celebration of the carnival atmosphere by drawing attention to the colourful costumes is the primary occupation of the lines above. The poet strives to convey the happy and joyful mood of the Notting Hill Carnival through a special emphasis on the spelling of the word carnival as “car-ni-val”. Going beyond the written text, the poem turns into a song of carnival sung by the poet. Dressing in the costumes of kings, queens and the peacocks are the integral part of the comic rituals of carnivals. The costuming and taking up of different identities enable subordinated people to go out of the limitations and prohibitions of the class boundaries, in Bakhtin’s words, “barriers were raised, provided there was nothing but laughter” (90). D’Aguiar depicts the unifying aspect of the carnivals:

come let we wind and grind no girl
carnival not once a year
come let we wind and grind

we catch the morning bird’s song
in steel pan and bass sounds
beat out those songs all day
(D’Aguiar, “Notting Hill” 24-29)

Defeating the oppressions of everyday life, the poet in these lines, invites all the people to join in the carnival which will unify all the blacks under a collective activity of festival celebration. Moreover, he encourages the black people to live each day of their lives as carnival time, not just once a year. In the second part of the poem, the poet argues that the carnival tradition, and its significance for black solidarity will be always kept alive in the bass sounds which are the rhythmic patterns of reggae music. The significance of Notting Hill Carnival for the multiracial character of Britain is emphasised by John McLeod:

In recent years, however, the carnival has become promoted as a celebratory sign of London’s general multicultural and racially harmonious condition that apparently has been achieved. D’Aguiar’s poem clearly celebrates the carnival but also regards it as a response to (and not an escape from) wider problems of racial and cultural division. At the Notting Hill Carnival there incubates a potentially radical and inclusive social vision of London that might hold out the possibility of transformation for the nation as a whole. (“London Stylee” 233)

As McLeod states, carnivals are not purely reactionary activities to oppose racial discrimination and racial violence, but they are also celebrations of multicultural nature of Britain, reflecting the racial diversity of British society. What is more significant in McLeod's argument is that unifying power of carnivals gradually gains a broader dimension by including British society also and becomes a celebratory symbol of Britain's multicultural and multiracial structure. Therefore, instead of causing racial conflicts, carnivals provide black people with an opportunity to create a racial consciousness by bringing together black people with the British society and unify them. Hence, carnivals offer black people a platform to share and live their culture in a communal atmosphere.

D'Aguiar's and Johnson's ardent struggle to create a kind of collective consciousness among the black people to sustain their Caribbean cultural identity is explained by Sartre:

The poetic act, then, is a dance of the soul; the poet turns round and round like a dervish until he faints; he has established his ancestors' time in himself, he feels it flowing with its peculiar violent pulls; he hopes to find himself in his rhythmic pulsation; I shall say that he tries to make himself possessed by his people's negritude; he hopes that the echoes of his tam-tam will come to awaken timeless instincts sleeping within him. (125)

According to Sartre's argument, the black poet turns the act of writing into a primitive ritualistic dance in which people lose themselves in an ecstasy of trance, where they find their true nature of negritude, namely, their identity. Johnson and D'Aguiar in their poems undertake the duty of becoming the poetic leaders of their people leading them to preserve their cultural identity and calling them to be ready to fight for their cultural identity.

Similarly, Johnson's poem "Bass Culture" reminds the black people of the pain and suffering that their ancestors experienced to protect their culture. The poem begins with a call:

muzik of blood
black reared
pain rooted

heart geared

 it is di beat of di heart
 this pulsing of blood
 that is a bubblin bass
 a bad bad beat
 pushin gainst the wall
 whey bar black blood.
 (Johnson, "Bass Culture" 1-4, 8-13)

The music described in this poem is reggae music the most important elements of which are the use of the bass guitar and rhythm which is an important characteristic of Jamaican music (Habekost 59). Aligning reggae music with poetry, Johnson in this poem specifically concentrates on the importance of reggae which constitutes the basic structure of Afro-Caribbean culture. Reggae music depends on the experiences of slavery bringing together the pain, suffering and resistance. Johnson repeatedly underlines reggae as the music of blood, the roots of which go back to the "slave revolts and uprisings" during colonialism (Hebdige 47). Listening to reggae music will enable black people to excavate their Afro-Caribbean roots, whereby they will attain consciousness of their black identity which will give them the power to resist against racism. The power of music in fostering black resistance and the maintenance of Afro-Caribbean cultural values is especially emphasised in Johnson's poem. Therefore, listening to music itself becomes an instrument of resistance for the black people in declaring their identity. The relevance of music to the Afro-Caribbean tradition of resistance to authority is explained as follows:

One of the less obvious ways in which the slaves fought back was through their music. Music was one of the means through which they could express their resentment, anger, and frustration. From the time of the maroons the blowing of the *abeng* (cow horn) served as a signal for the slaves to take up arms. Other instruments helped the slaves in subtler ways. Drumming was particularly important. By preserving African drumming traditions, by remembering African rhythms, the slaves could keep alive the memory of the freedom they had lost. They could keep a part of themselves free from European influence. (Hebdige 26)

Johnson's call to listen to music bears a special importance, because he believes that music will reflect the pain and torture that the ancestors of the black people experienced in the past. In addition to that, the reggae music will also give power and

encouragement to black people who will fight against racism in Britain by keeping the memories of suffering of their ancestors alive in their minds. The function of reggae music and bass culture in the poem, “Bass Culture” is further explored in “Reggae Sounds”, where the poet emphatically pays attention to the rhythmic structure of reggae music:

Rhythm of a tropical electrical storm
 (cooled down to the pace of the struggle)
 flame-rhythm of historically yearning
 flame-rhythm of the time of turning
 measuring the time for bombs and for burning. (10-14)

Reinforcement of the racial identities with the rise of racism and British nationalism, and of conflict between different groups is resembled to the creation of an electrical storm which emanates from a friction created by changing climatic events. The identification of the poet with the electrical storm to explain the energy embedded in black people and the tension between opposing groups are significant in that, the electrical storm does not necessarily produce thunder but lighting, which is much more damaging than thunder. Associating the rhythms of reggae music and its harsh and aggressive tone with the liberation struggles of the black people whose dynamism is associated with the lightning created by the electrical storm, the poem illustrates the power of black people and their readiness to fight for their cause till death. The rhythmic sound of the poem, likewise, summons up the strength of blacks and calls for the recognition of their power as a group, and motivates them to stand firm against oppression. Reggae music constitutes the underlying structure of the poem which becomes a unifying element in the forging of a distinctive black identity. Reggae music is reminiscent of the harsh circumstances of the times of slavery that gave birth to the music. Michael Davila states the importance of reggae music for the creation of racial consciousness:

Music is a powerful medium that transcends many of the barriers of the society, including illiteracy and poverty. It gives voice to people that frequently go unheard or ignored. Totalitarian military regimes have worked to confine or suppress it. Musicians have become *ad hoc* political leaders weaving manifestos and history lessons into rhythms and melodies for both enjoyment and education. Reggae and Afro-Brazilian music, drawing from the vast experiences

of their collective diaspora, have become a voice of resistance to institutions of oppression in power for centuries. (1)

Accordingly, reggae music more than being merely a medium of entertainment, becomes a platform of contestation and conflict within racialised power structures. Motivating people to join in the struggle against discrimination, reggae music is situated within a wider historical context which teaches black people about its deeper significance for their ancestors. Accordingly, re-appropriating reggae imported from Africa, Johnson transforms his poem from being an instrument of expressing ideas into a performance of building up of energy which results in the electrical storm of resistance and a way of living culture which will construct identity. Thus, music as a part of oral tradition plays an instrumental role not only in the period of slavery, but also in the present day experiences of black people in Britain.

The song tradition and music are an indispensable part of African oral tradition and have evolved out of the “musical practices of the slaves” (Floyd 6). Oral tradition is usually the product of “deep and refined thinking which certainly reflects the communal experience of the people” (Damme 8). Containing within itself various forms like “lyric, proverb, riddle, epic, song and tale as well as dance, mime and music”, oral tradition is a way of observing a society that reveals the way the community feels about itself (Scheub 3). In this respect, oral tradition reflects the society in which it is developed. As Scheub states:

African oral tradition is never simply a spoken art; it is an enactment, an event, a ritual, a performance. Patterning of imagery is the most visible artistic activity, involving the blending of contemporary world and the fanciful fabrication of the tradition... Real world images may be cultural, historical, or personal; their blending with fantasy, the movement from one state of being to another, is mythic, and is coupled with a re-enactment that is ritualistic. (3)

Oral tradition, thus, gains a ritualistic feature when the real events of the contemporary world are blended with fantasy and myth. Hence, oral tradition, as Scheub states, is not merely a spoken art, but is a ritualistic performance bringing together the members of a community.

Moreover, the communal performance of these songs fostered the strengthening of the ties between the slaves who were scattered as a result of the transatlantic slave trade. The slaves could express their fears, aspirations, sorrows and happiness by singing songs, telling stories, and playing verbal games which were imperative mediums of oral tradition. Once the danger of keeping their oral tradition was understood by the slave masters, singing songs and playing instruments like drums were strictly forbidden, as Silvio Torres-Saillant states:

Besides the relevance of musical expression as a result of the non-scribal demands of oral societies, an area of relevance, with implications for resistance and political self-assertion, has to do with the history of prohibitions in colonial times. Suffice it to mention that the very first Act of the Tobago Assembly, which was promulgated in 1768 to ensure the good government and supervision of slaves for the productivity and safety of the colony, forbids musical performance by the enslaved population. Clause 19 of the Act bars planters, overseers, and other plantation authorities from ‘allowing any slave or slaves to beat any drum or drums, empty casks, boxes, great gourds, or to blow horns, shells or other loud instruments upon such plantation or allow slaves belonging to other persons or plantations to assemble and mix with their own, for that or any other bad purpose, such person shall forfeit the sum of ten pounds.’ (37)

Therefore, singing songs, telling tales, proverbs, and verbal games served the multiple function of preserving communal values and group solidarity as well as “providing occasions for the individuals to transcend, at least symbolically, the inevitable restrictions of his environment and his society by permitting him to express deeply held feelings which he ordinarily was not allowed to verbalise” (Levine 216). Application of oral tradition in the everyday life of the slaves is explicitly observed in Dabydeen’s “The Servants’ Song”, a poem in *Slave Song*. The poem tells a story about the search for the mistresses lost ring:

We saach kitchen, hall-kana in de house
 We saach we hair like we comb for louse
 Trow way de curry an look in de pot
 Trow way de baby an look in de cot
 Bu no ring deh!
 O me mama, how me friken wha Missie go seh!
 Wha we go do? We wring we haan
 Saary-saary we bin baan_
 Till Peta, chupit in e ead since e bin young baai when e fall
 Dung coconut tree_
 Man chase am, hooman scaan am, call dem husband ‘Peta’
 When dem a cuss_

Dis maad-rass, maga-baai seh,
 ‘Leh we go look in duck-battie, me geh mind da ring deh-deh.(22-33)

We search in the kitchen, hall, all corners in the house

We search our hair like we’re combing for lice
 Throw away the curry and look in the pot
 Throw away the baby and look in the cot
 But there’s n ring!
 O my mother, how I’m afraid of what Missie will say!
 What shall we do?
 We wring our hands
 Sorry-sorry we were born
 Till Peter, stupid in his head since he was a young boy when he fell down a
 coconut-tree
 Men shoo him away, women are scornful of him, call their husband ‘Peter’
 when they are cursing
 This mad-arsed, emancipated boy says
 Let’s go look up duck’s backside, my mind tells me that the ring is there. (45)

During slavery, pervaded by never-ceasing hard work, the tradition of songs and story telling provided an opportunity for the slaves to openly express their feelings, and thus, to find an outlet to their thoughts. The story about Peter and his becoming the fool of the village and a trickster figure is common characteristics of slave tales. As Lawrence Levine argues, “the image of the trickster, who through cunning and unscrupulousness prevails over his more powerful antagonists, pervades slave tales” (217). Similarly, the humorous story about the slaves searching all over the house for the lost ring including their hair where they usually find lice, looking in the pot by throwing away the food and looking in the cot by throwing away the baby all display a comic tone which demonstrates that the slaves could transform the burden of heavy work and oppression into a joyful play of tricking and, in this way, satirising the plantation holders within the realm of oral tradition. It is the only way that they can subvert the authority of white slave owners. The overwhelming power of slaves culminates in the discovery of the Mistress’s ring in the anus of a duck which gives the slaves a secret joy of triumph. “And when she show aff an she kiss she ring she na know why all aweh laugh so loud / she beg we foh tell till she beat we, bribe we, but leh she kiss we rass first !” (47-48). “And when she shows off and kisses her ring she wonders why we all burst out laughing / she begs us to tell till beats us, bribes us, but let her kiss our arse first !” (45). Although the slaves find the lost ring in a duck’s anus, they do not tell the mistress

where they have found it. When the mistress kisses her ring, all the slaves make fun of it but the mistress never understands what is happening. Hence, their secret gives them the power to deceive and mock their masters. As an alternative to the everyday practise of oppression and exploitation, the slaves find a way to ridicule their masters by singing.

Apart from its discursive function of undermining the dominant authority, the oral tradition also has an important purpose of expressing the misery, sorrow and suffering of slaves who communicate with each other through songs and, thus, achieve to enliven African cultural heritage. Dabydeen's "The Slavewoman's Song" in *Slave Song* represents the use of songs as an expression of grief by giving rise to the common problems of slave societies:

Ya howl_
 Hear how ya howl_
 Tell me wha ya howl foh
 Tell me noh?
 Pickni?
 Dem tek pickni way?
 Wha dem do wid pickni
 Mek yu knack yu head wid stone
 Bite yu haan like daag-bone?
 (Dabydeen, "The Slavewoman's Song" ll. 1-9)

You howl
 Hear how you howl
 Tell me why you howl
 Tell me, no?
 Is it child?
 Did they take away your child?
 What have they done with your child
 That you knock your head with stone
 Bite your hand like dog-bone?
 (Dabydeen, "The Slavewoman's Song" 61)

In the poem, the persona is trying to understand the reason of the moaning of a slave girl and she tries to console her and feels sympathy for her. With a series of questions, the song of the slave woman gives voice to the problems about the lives of slave women who are separated from their children or beaten to death. These lines show that the hard living conditions in slave communities are turned into a double burden for the women who are exploited not only physically but also sexually and psychologically. Hence, the

singing of a song of lamentation in the poem provides a temporary psychological relief for the slave woman. As an integral part of the Afro-Caribbean oral tradition, “call and response” technique used in the poem places the “individual in continual dialogue with his community, allowing him at once to preserve his voice as a distinct entity and to blend it with those of his fellows” (Levine 216). However, in “The Slavewoman’s Song”, there is an absence of response on the part of the slave girl in spite of the calls of the slave woman. The slave girl’s silence gives hints about the extension of her suffering which leaves her speechless and unresponsive to everything.

In relation to the call and response technique, orature is an important common feature that is clearly observed in the poetry of all these three poets. Their poems are not only intended to be read silently but find their complete meaning when read aloud. In this way, the readers of these poems are also invited to participate in the performance of the poems which quite explicitly bears the characteristics of Afro-Caribbean oral culture.

When the roots of black people are traced back to the long and painful history of slavery, exploitation, suffering, and humiliation, it is not a coincidence to find an intensity of hatred, anger and resentment in Linton Kwesi Johnson’s poems. The combative attitude of Johnson in igniting the fires of resistance can be observed in “Fite Dem Back” too. It is a noteworthy poem for its emphasis on the racial stereotypes. The poem is not an examination of violence or racism applied to blacks, on the contrary, there is an urgent call for self-defense in the face of fascist attacks:

some a dem say dem a niggah haytah
 an’ some a dem say dem a black beatah
 some a dem say dem a black stabah
 an’ some a dem a paki bashah.
 (Johnson, “Fite Dem Back” 5-8)

Using the discourse adopted by the racist ideology, Johnson displays the fact that it is the white people who are the reasons of anarchy in the society, not the black people. Almost every line of the poem ends with an expression of verbal violence as it is observed in the above lines, “niggah haytar”, “black beatah”, “black stabah”, “paki

bashah". The only way to cope with racism in Britain is to take counter action as Johnson suggests:

fashist an di attack
 noh baddah worry 'bout dat
 fashist an di attack
 wi wi' fite dem back
 fashist an di attack
 den wi countah-attack
 fashist an di attack
 den wi drive dem back.
 (Johnson, "Fite Dem Back" 9-16)

As it is indicated, it is not the black people who are the major cause of the social breakdown, but racism motivated by the fascist groups inducing anger and hatred resulting in violence. The intensity of violence increases when it shifts from being a one-sided act of hatred into a war-like conflict and violence between two opposing groups. It is declared in the poem that it is high time to take action against the oppression and terror. The poem's call for action justifies itself when the extreme rightwing fascist attacks are taken into consideration. The poet's solacing of black people is significant, as well, in his affirmation that they will no longer suffer from the fascist attacks because black people will fight against racism with their own weapon by counter-attacking violence. A remarkable example of this counter-attack strategy is to be seen most evidently in "Di Great Insohreckshan". The poem is preoccupied with Britain's inner city riots with a special focus on the Brixton Riots:

it woz in april nineteen eighty wan
 doun inna di ghetto af Brixtan
 dat di babylan dem cauz such a frickshan
 dat it bring about a great insohreckshan
 an it spread all ovah di naeshan
 it woz truly an historikal occayshan.
 (Johnson, "Di Great Insohreckshan" 1-6)

Being one of the inner city areas of London, Brixton is an area where black communities are concentrated and which has a notorious reputation not only as a place of "economic decline, social distress and racial discrimination" but also as a section where "police interventionism has been at its maximum" during the 1970s and the 1980s (Unsworth 71). The violence and racial harassment directed by the police at the

black populations living in Brixton generated a mutual hatred between the police and black populations, which gave rise to the escalation of polarisation between the two groups and resulted in the outbreak of street riots during the 1970s. Amrit Wilson comments on the significance of the Brixton riots:

Battles between the police and black communities in Britain are becoming increasingly frequent. But the riot in Brixton on 11 and 12 April was one of unprecedented intensity: It was not a race riot but a violent explosion of anger against the vicious and racist police harassment which black people in Brixton have been facing for decades. (806)

Brixton riots played a pivotal role for black identity struggle. For the first time, black people were determined to take action against oppression and racism. Drawing British national attention to the situation of black people in inner city areas, the riots in Brixton represent an important turning point for the black people because they began to write their own history. Instead of dealing with the frustration of being marginalised and disempowered, Johnson is concerned with the affirmation of black power with precise emphasis on the Brixton riots which have a great contribution in igniting the fires of resistance. After expressing his desire to actively take part in the riots by saying “it woz event af di year / an I wish I ad been dere” (Johnson, “Di Great Insohreckshan” 7-8), the poet comments on the instrumental function of Brixton riots in spreading the waves of resistance to the rest of the black populations:

an wen mi check out di ghetto grape vine
 fi fine out all I coulda fine
 evry rebel jussa revel in dem story
 dem a taak bout di powah an di glory
 dem a taak bout di burnin an di lootin
 dem a taak bout di smashin an di grabin
 dem a tell mi bout di vanquish an di victri.
 (Johnson, “Di Great Insohreckshan” 16-22)

The most important evidence which testifies to the black people’s making of history is the circulation of the stories of bravery in the “ghetto grape vine” which is “an underground or an alternative news medium” (Jackaman 135). Celebrating the glory and the victory of black rebels contributes to a great extent to the creation of public opinion about the power of blacks by encouraging those who suffer from police harassment.

Through riots and underground media, British public attention was drawn to social problems of the inner city areas like mass unemployment, bad housing, unhealthy living conditions and lack of public services with an attempt to seek the causes of racial conflicts. The level of consciousness raised by the black people suffering from persistent prejudice and discrimination entailed them to challenge the biologically fixed black identity naturalised through the instruments of mainstream media and its racist discourse.

The analysis of the poems of Linton Kwesi Johnson, David Dabydeen and Fred D'Aguiar, reveals that the affirmation of the existence of a distinct national identity of black people is the primary requirement of the equality of black people who are entangled within the cultural codes of a society which casts blacks as outsiders. By giving voice to the problems of black people living in Britain during the 1970s and the 1980s and by giving them the opportunity to express themselves, the poetry of Linton Kwesi Johnson, David Dabydeen and Fred D'Aguiar demonstrates the transfer of the power of representation from the hands of the dominant racist ideology to the black people themselves. Undermining the authority of dominant ideology which "taking on the mastery of positing identity on something or someone else", these poets question the power of this dominant ideology in the British society which projects an identity on black people as the other (Palumbo-Liu 768).

In order to show the impossibility of fixing black identity through stereotypical representations, Johnson, Dabydeen and D'Aguiar in their poetry take up the task of reconstructing black identity. These three poets undertake the responsibility of expressing the necessity of taking active action against prejudices. The concept of resistance and the struggle of black people to liberate themselves from cultural and political oppression as prevailing themes are observed in Johnson's poetry which deals with the problems of black people living in the ghettos and the racial conflicts between the British police system and black people in the 1970s and the 1980s. Encouraging the people of their own race to take active steps for their rights, Johnson, Dabydeen and D'Aguiar supported the black struggle by affirming, glorifying and celebrating the Afro-Caribbean cultural identity. Emphasising the role of the blacks in keeping the

Afro-Caribbean culture alive, these poets strongly affirm the necessity of constructing a collective black consciousness. The racial consciousness, they believe, will bring together the people of their race under a unifying black identity by warning them against the dangers of imitating the dominant white culture.

Accordingly, Johnson, Daybydeen and D'Aguiar encourage people of their race to break from the chains of white supremacy in the society they live in, and embrace black national consciousness. Drawing on Hall's understanding of the two types of cultural identity which are collective identity and individual identity ("Cultural Identity and Diaspora" 393), it can be observed that black people try to construct unifying collective cultural identity which will reflect a shared culture and common history. However, this does not mean that collective cultural identity creates another fixed blackness which depends on the premise of exclusion and inclusion. It does not aim at creating a homogenisation of black identity. As Hall argues, identity has a multiple perspective and it moves simultaneously through "the vector of similarity and continuity; and the vector of difference and rupture" ("Cultural Identity and Diaspora" 395). In other words, it is impossible to separate collective cultural identity from the individual identity. Therefore, collective cultural identity incorporates varieties of individual identities and enables the interaction of ethnic differences. The image of blackness becomes a collective culture which incorporates different national groups together in a new pattern of identity, structured by the common response of blacks to the experiences of racial oppression and their anger produced by cultural exclusion. This perception of black identity also conforms with Paul Gilroy's concept of "double consciousness" which depends on the "recognition of sameness and differentiation" and the amalgamation of collective and individual identities (*Against Race* 101). Hence, these poets suggest that black people constitute their new identities with a sense of solidarity among all the immigrants living in Britain and facilitate the making up of an all encompassing and distinct mode of blackness including Caribbean, African and Indian people. This kind of collective black identity leads to the formation of a new indigenous, and at the same time, diasporic culture deriving its power both from current social and cultural environment shaped by their day-to-day experiences and indigenous traditional Creole culture. Eventually, this new black culture becomes an expressive

culture for the people who are dislocated from their original homes to raise their voices against racial injustices, political inequality and cultural suppression. However, it is not only for raising questions or expressing complaints that black culture is reconfigured. What constitutes the core of black culture is the free expression and assertion of unique black identity which forms a bridge whereby the indigenous authentic cultures of the past are transmitted to the present generation of blacks who have no first-hand experience of them.

CONCLUSION

As a new branch of contemporary British poetry, contemporary black British poetry was developed by the second generation of black communities who settled in Britain after the Second World War. Although the black British poets were marginalised and were not accepted by mainstream British poetry, they have contributed to the enrichment and plurality of contemporary British poetry which has gained a new dimension with works that give expression to the experiences of black people. Linton Kwesi Johnson, David Dabydeen and Fred D'Aguiar are three of the black British poets whose poetry gives voice to the experiences of black people who are continually marginalised by mainstream society.

Although each poet comes from a different origin, they all share the same experience of discrimination and racism as blacks living in Britain. Linton Kwesi Johnson coming from Jamaica, and David Dabydeen and Fred D'Aguiar coming from Guyana, share the same notion of a unifying black identity embracing people of different ethnic and racial origins. In this respect, their differing origins are not important since they share a common experience of being subjected to racism in Britain. Dedicating themselves to represent black people who were previously suppressed, unrepresented or misrepresented, the poetry of Johnson, Dabydeen and D'Aguiar is oppositional as it calls the idea of distinctive British culture and its unity into question.

Relying, to a great extent, on their personal day-to-day experiences of discrimination, exclusion, and prejudice, Linton Kwesi Johnson, David Dabydeen and Fred D'Aguiar give voice to the marginalised black immigrants who were considered as the problem groups by the British public during the 1970s and the 1980s. In their poetry, these poets try to show that the cause of the problem is not black existence in Britain, but the racist hostility of white Britain which is reluctant to embrace its black population and pushes them to the peripheries of mainstream society. In this respect, repudiating the current public opinion about the black population as the "enemy within" (Gilroy, "One Nation Under a Groove" 45), Johnson, Dabydeen and D'Aguiar demonstrate clearly in their

poetry that it is almost impossible to survive in a society in which there is extreme form of racism, brutality, and hostility towards black people who are treated as potential criminals. In order to show the falsity of racist ideas, these three poets deal with the issue of racism as a false-representation of reality which produces biased attitudes about the black people. Therefore, their poetry is very important in displaying the difference between the representation of black people and the reality of their everyday lives.

These three poets are specifically significant in exploring the issue of racism in different contexts and they bring together the slaves' experience of racism and the immigrants' experience of racism in displaying the connection between the past and the present. In other words, although these three poets deal with the same issue of racism, their way of handling this issue is individual. While Linton Kwesi Johnson, focusing on racism in the 1970s, develops an aggressive attitude in his approach to racism with a special focus on police brutality and the criminalisation of black people, David Dabydeen concentrates on colonial racism and reveals the psychological damage caused by racism on the minds of the slaves, exploring their daily experiences in the plantation society. On the other hand, although Fred D'Aguiar also concentrates on racism during the 1970s and the 1980s, he does not develop an aggressive attitude as Johnson does. D'Aguiar's approach to racism is rather humorous and more light-hearted. Through the observation of the different approaches to racism developed by these three poets, the kaleidoscopic nature of racism and the variety of its dimensions are more explicitly demonstrated.

As illustrated in the works of these poets, colonial racism as defined in the first chapter is not so different from racism during the 1970s and the 1980s, since both of them incorporate the instruments of exploitation, pushing black people to a subservient position. The working conditions of black people during the 1970s and the 1980s is in many ways not better than the working conditions of the slaves in the colonial times, as was illustrated by Johnson's "Inglan is a Bitch" and "Sonny's Lettah", D'Aguiar's "Ballad of Throwaway People" and Dabydeen's "Burning Down the Fields". Black people in Britain during the 1970s and the 1980s were exposed to racism either through the exploitation of their labour under the system of capitalism, or through police torture

and racially involved legislations like the SUS law which regards all the blacks as potential criminals. Therefore, while in colonial times black people were forced to work in extremely hard conditions, being exploited by the plantation owners, they were still exposed to hard working conditions, and work in low-skilled and low-paid jobs during the 1970s and the 1980s in Britain. Additionally, while the slaves in colonial times were exposed to physical and psychological torture by their masters, the black immigrants in Britain in the 1970s were exposed to police violence and humiliation under custody. These facts show that little had changed since colonial times about the lives of black people who had to fight racism.

In their fight against racism, the primary attempt of all these three poets is the same: to restore the self-esteem and self-dignity that were lost under colonial and racial exploitation. Dabydeen's "Love Song" gives voice to the self-hatred of a black man who compares his blackness with the purity of the whiteness of a white woman, and his feelings of self-disgust. Likewise, D'Aguiar's "Colour" concentrates on the nightmare of a black man who dreams about the sheets of his bed stained by the blackness of his skin. In a similar manner, Johnson, in his poem "All wi Doin is Defendin" calls the people of his own race to be proud of their blackness and not to feel ashamed of it. He insists on the peculiarities of black cultural identity, and calls black people to fight against injustices and oppression.

Furthermore, what brings together these three poets is also their common solution to the problem of racism. They see the only way of fighting against racism as the creating of a new black identity in Britain without losing its ties to its Afro-Caribbean origins. The first strategy of the assertion of their cultural identity employed by Johnson, Dabydeen and D'Aguiar is the use of the Creole language. The rejection of Standard English which is thought to incorporate the racial discourse to naturalise discrimination, and the adoption of the Creole language as a political decision is considered to be a more effective way of asserting their cultural identity. Since Standard English is considered to be insufficient to convey the Afro-Caribbean spirit, and record everyday bitterness of racial subordination, all three poets deliberately prefer to use the Creole language which can better convey and help to recover the culture of the black people. They use Creole

as a subversive linguistic agent and a verbal weapon against the European domination of Afro-Caribbean culture. Secondly, the original Afro-Caribbean self-expression manifests itself in forms of “balladry, song, or folk material” which are derived from the oral traditions inherent in Afro-Caribbean culture (Niven 296). In this regard, Linton Kwesi Johnson transforms poetry into a performance art and is recognised as a poet who liberates poetry out of the printed page by including reggae rhythms in his poetry and, thus, gains popularity as a performance poet. Johnson’s performance poetry possesses a power to transform poetry into a ritual experience creating a collective atmosphere in which both the audience and the poet participate. Trying to transmit Afro-Caribbean oral tradition and its music to the younger black generations, Linton Kwesi Johnson succeeds in combining Afro-Caribbean cultural elements and contemporary British experiences in his poetry. Johnson’s “Forces of Victory” and D’Aguiar’s “Notting Hill” are poems where the two poets celebrate the importance of carnival culture of the Afro-Caribbean people by emphasising the role it plays in keeping the Afro-Caribbean culture alive. Likewise, while Johnson in “Bass Culture” deals with reggae music as an integral part of Afro-Caribbean culture, the roots of which depend on the suffering of black people under slavery, D’Aguiar deals with his grandmother as a symbolic figure of his ties with his Afro-Caribbean roots in the poems in *Mama Dot*. In a similar manner, Dabydeen in a poem, section XXI in *Turner*, strongly affirms the necessity of constructing a collective black consciousness which will bring together the people of his race, under a unifying black identity like the beads of a necklace, while in “Two Cultures”, he warns against the dangers of imitating the dominant white culture and assimilating them to mainstream society by denying their own native culture.

Afro-Caribbean identity is emphasised in the poetry of Johnson, Dabydeen and D’Aguiar. Raising the awareness of people to develop a consciousness about black cultural identity, these poets have tried to erase the psychological effects of the exclusionary practice of racism. After restoring the self-esteem and dignity that were erased under dominant hierarchical representations, the black poets undertake the responsibility of constructing a completely new black identity which consists of the glorification and transportation of original Afro-Caribbean cultural elements into the present day experiences of immigrants to prevent its falling into oblivion in the future.

Additionally, Stuart Hall's concept of identity, which is never completed and constructed through representation ("Cultural Identity and Diaspora" 392), enables black people to represent themselves not through fixed and stereotypical referents, but through ambivalent and continuously changing referents. As Hall specifies identity should be considered as a process of "production" not as an already accomplished fact ("Cultural Identity and Diaspora" 392). In this way, black people find themselves in a struggle to define new ways of representation of black population, and thus, produce new identities for black people. Hall's concept of identity is also perceived in Homi Bhabha's statement that, "identity is never a *priori* nor a finished product", and "its representation is always spatially split" (100). Hence, in the endeavour to rediscover their indigenous identity as an act of struggle against the hegemonic influence of British culture, leading black poets have occupied themselves with the refutation of the concept of identity which is defined through certain historical and biological factors that contribute to the production and establishment of stereotypical representations.

Although the main consideration of these three poets seems, at first sight, to directly address the marginalised black people, they, in fact, succeed in addressing the white audience who are thus forced to evaluate the relationship between the blacks and whites from an entirely new perspective, that is, the viewpoint of black people themselves who have been deprived of self-expression for a very long period of time. Through their poetry, Johnson, Dabydeen and D'Aguiar not only raise consciousness about black identity among the blacks but also encourage white people to develop awareness and recognise black identity.

These three poets do not only aim at constructing a black identity by keeping the Afro-Caribbean culture alive by transmitting it to the next generation of black population living in Britain. Their poetry goes one step further than celebrating the black culture and serves as a propaganda tool and calls for black resistance against injustice. Hence, they encourage the people of their race to fight for their own rights.

Considering the social upheavals and racial conflicts which dominated the British scene in the period between the 1960s and the 1980s, it can be observed that the struggle of

the black people during these times played a significant role in changing the attitude of Britain towards black presence. 21st century contemporary Britain has initiated “multicultural integration strategies” to protect the previously oppressed social groups from hatred, racism and discrimination (McGhee 6). The implementation of the Crime and Disorder Act in 1998 can be considered as a decisive step in Britain’s effort to stop racist violence by revising its criminal justice system (Rowe 99). For the first time, British police are “attempting to become increasingly ‘opened up’ to critique and contestation through the expansion of consultative mechanisms with the communities they serve” (McGhee 6). To improve the relationship between the police and ethnic minorities, this act played a highly significant role. It is also for the first time with this act that stop and search policies under the [SUS laws] were accepted as “the major source of resentment because of disproportionate stopping and searching of the members of the Afro-Caribbean community, especially young men” (McGhee 16). Additionally, the Home Affairs Committee in its 1986 report stated that the “most shameful and dispiriting aspects of race relations in Britain is the incidence of racial attacks and harassment” (qtd. in Lago 7). Considering Britain’s endeavour to create a more harmonious society including all its members without excluding the minorities, it can be stated that the social turmoil as a result of racial conflicts during the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s are the pains and sufferings of a society in a process of giving birth to a more harmonious, egalitarian, multicultural and multiracial society. In this process, David Dabydeen, Linton Kwesi Johnson and Fred D’Aguiar with their poetry contributed to the construction of this multi-racial and multi-cultural society.

GLOSSARY

Aan:	On	Cyaan:	Cannot
Ad:	Had	Dandamite:	Dynamite
Af:	Of	Dadee:	Father
Alaam:	Alarm	Dat:	That
An:	And	Decishan:	Decision
A'ready:	Already	Dem:	They
Andah:	Under	Dere:	There
Andahgroun:	Underground	Dhu:	Do
Anywhey:	Anywhere	Di:	The
Appn:	Happen	Dis:	This
Arres':	Arrested	Divishan:	Division
Awftah:	After	Doan:	Don't
		Doze:	Those
Bakkle:	Battle	Dough:	Money
Bashah:	Basher	Doun:	Down
Beatah:	Beater	Dung:	Down
Bes':	Best		
Bline:	Blind	Evrybody:	Everybody
Bout:	About	Fa:	For
Bruk:	Broken	Fashist:	Fascist
Bublin:	Bubbling	Fak:	Fact
		Fi:	To, For
Canceal:	Conceal	Fite:	Fight
Canfuse:	Confuse	Fine out:	Find out
Chamar:	Low-caste	Forwud:	Forward
Cauz:	Cause	Frickshan:	Friction
Cole:	Cold	Fyah:	Fire
Coulda:	Could have		
Countah:	Counter	Gainst:	Against

Goh:	Go		
Govahment:	Government	Naeshan:	Nation
Grung:	Ground	Naw:	Now
Gwaan:	Go on	Niggah:	Nigger
Haffi:	Have to	Nite:	Night
Haytah:	Hater	Noh:	Not
Historical:	Historical	Non-di-les:	Nonetheless
Hol':	Hold	Not'n':	Nothing
Hole:	Whole		
		Occayshan:	Occasion
Insteada:	Instead of	Ol':	Old
Inna:	Inner	'otell:	Hotel
Insohreckshan:	Insurrection	Ovah:	Over
Jab:	Job	Pan:	Upon
Jallity:	Jollity	Paypah:	Paper
Jus.	Just	Plat:	Plot
		Powah:	Power
Landan:	London	Pramis:	Promis
Lang:	Long	Pushin:	Pushing
Laas:	Lose	Raisin:	Raising
Leggo:	Let go	Relijan:	Religion
Lickle:	Little	Rite:	Right
Lootin:	Looting	Ritewing:	Right wing
Mawnin:	Morning	Salim:	Solemn
Mek:	Make	Sarry:	Sorry
Mi:	My, Me, I	Sarrow:	Sorrow
Mistri:	Mystery	Seh:	Say
Mistah:	Mister	Sen':	Send
Mitalagy:	Mythology	Si:	See
Murdah:	Murder	Shack:	Shock

Soh:	So	Tun:	Turn
Someting:	Something		
Smashin:	Smashing	Waak:	Walk
Stabah:	Stabber	Wan:	One
Suvvive:	Survive	Weh:	Where
		Wen:	When
Taak:	Talk	Wha:	What
Tek:	Take	Whey:	Where, What
Teknalagy:	Technology	Wi:	We, Our
T'ief:	Thief	Winnin:	Winning
Touchin:	Touching	Wok:	Work
Toun:	Town	Woulda:	Would have
		Woun:	wound
T'ree:	Three	Woz:	Was
Trute:	Truth	Victri:	Victory

* Meanings of the words have been collected from various online website sources:

<<http://www.websters-online-dictionary.org/translation/Creole/>>.

<<http://multilingualbooks.com/onlinedicts-creole.html>>.

<<http://www.niceup.com/patois.txt>>.

< <http://www.jamaicans.com/dictionary/template.php?t=display>>.

END NOTES

¹ In 1958 there were outbreaks of violence and hostility directed against West Indian immigrants in Notting Hill, an area in western London which was socially downgraded (Mason 51). An argument between a black man and a white man at a public house in Nottingham in 1958 led to white riots against blacks. The young white people conducted “nigger-baiting” in various inner-city areas (Smith 141). Crowds of white people came together to randomly attack any black person they came across, an activity they called the “nigger-hunt”, and encouraged other white people to do the same (Smith 141).

² The National Front was founded in 1967, supporting “neo-fascist” and anti-immigration viewpoints (Gilroy, “One Nation under a Groove” 50). It stood for the protection of national characteristics of Britain advocating the use of firm restrictions on immigration with an attempt to remove ethnic minorities from Britain. It is worth mentioning that being a party committed explicitly to the preservation of racial purity of Britain, the National Front occupies a central place in promoting the widespread recognition and acceptance of racial discourse on the ideas of racial purity, cultural superiority and defence of the British nation from the threats posed by immigration and black settlement in Britain.

³ Blumenbach at the age of ten had been introduced to the study of skeletons at the university at Gotha, where his father was a professor. In 1775, he published *De Generis Humani Varietate Natura* an important work which caused him to be regarded as the father of anthropology. After presenting *De Generis Humani Varietate Natura* as a “doctoral dissertation to medical faculty of Gottinghen” in Germany, he became a professor at the University of Gottingen (Gould 1). Apart from his establishing the most effective racial classification, he is also the first who use the phrase the “Caucasian race” to refer to European people (Gould 1). Johann Friedrich Blumenbach (1752-1840) stands as an outstanding figure who is often referred to as the “father of racial classification” introducing the study of physical anthropology (Vora 184). It is a widely

accepted belief that the science of race originated with the publication of his *On the Natural Variety of Mankind* in 1795 in which Blumenbach claimed that “all human beings belong to a single species” (Montague 55).

The fundamental conception that is asserted in *On the Natural Variety of Mankind* is the emphasis on the “unity of the human species” and the recognition of the difficulty of classifications to determine the varieties of mankind (Blumenbach 89). He further tries to illustrate his statement by giving specific examples:

For although there seems to be so great a difference between widely separate nations, that you might easily take the inhabitants of the Cape of Good Hope, the Greenlanders, and the Circassians for so many different species of man, yet when the matter is thoroughly considered, you see that all do so run into one another, and that one variety of mankind does so sensibly pass into the other, that you cannot mark out the limits between them. (Blumenbach 98-99)

He attempts to divide human kind into different varieties largely by building his classification on “the formation of the head” (Hannaford 206). He divides human beings into five distinctive races “which may be designated and distinguished from each other by the names Caucasian, Mongolian, Ethiopian, American, and Malay” (Blumenbach 264). He explains by saying: “I have allotted the first place to the Caucasian, for the reasons given below, which make me esteem it the primeval one” (Blumenbach 264). Blumenbach after dividing the human races into categories puts the Caucasian as the primeval one because he considers it as the “most handsome and becoming” who are the inhabitants of Europe (265). Blumenbach coins the term Caucasian to describe the white race. The term is derived from a “skull in Blumenbach’s collection which comes from Caucasian mountain region of Russia” (Gosset 37). Blumenbach recognizes a strong resemblance between this skull and the German race, and thus, he concludes that the Caucasian regions may have been the original home of the Europeans.

He argues that *Homo sapiens* had been created in a single region and had spread throughout the world. The racial diversity for him, results from human beings’ migration to the other places and their adoption of different lifestyles in these various regions. Climate has the most important influence in racial variation for Blumenbach who states that:

First of all I will say a few words about the influence of climate, whose effects seem so great that distinguished men have thought that on this alone depended the different shapes, colour, manners and institutions of men. There are, however, two ways, in which man men may gather experience of a change of climate, both of which are to our purpose. They may emigrate and so change the climate, and also it may happen that the climate of their native country may sensibly become more mild or more severe, and so the inhabitants may degenerate. (Blumenbach 71)

Blumenbach refers to the changes in the physical appearance as the degeneration, as departure from the initial form of humanity at the creation. He believes that man was created perfect at first, the Caucasian race being the closest to that perfect initial form of human race, and later degenerated into inferior races as a result of differences in climate and habitat. In addition to the influence of climate in the degeneration of races, Blumenbach also pinpoints the impact of life style in determining the racial characteristics of people:

Besides climate we find it stated that the kind of life sometimes contributes to the racial form of face, as in the instances of Ethiopians, whose thick nose and swelling lips are always attributed to the way in which, whilst in their infancy, they are generally carried on backs of their mothers, who give them suck whilst they pound millet, or during their hard and heavy tasks. (232)

Blumenbach thinks that these changes continuing through many generations eventually become hereditary. Regarding the European race or Caucasian as the ideal race and closest to the original ideal race, Blumenbach claims that the two most degenerated forms of human races are Asians and Africans, and in this way tries to form a kind of hierarchical classification of human races which he explains as follows:

This diverges in both directions into two, most remote and very different from each other; on the one side, namely into the Ethiopian, and on the other into the Mongolian. The remaining two occupy the intermediate positions between that primeval one and these two extreme varieties. (264)

According to this hierarchical ordering of human races, the Mongolians, people living in Asia, and the Ethiopians, those in Africa, are considered as the most degenerated form of human races while the Americans and the Malay race are designated by Blumenbach as the intermediary forms between the ideal and the most degenerate ones. Instead of

claiming that “each major race had been separately created”, an idea which would be the established belief of the 19th century, he strongly argues for the unity of the human species (Gould 4). He further refutes the common idea that black Africans have their own unique features of inferiority by showing that the most of the racial variations are the impositions of climate and lifestyle, and therefore, can be easily reversed by living in a new region or by adopting a new lifestyle. Nonetheless, when Blumenbach presents his classification of human diversity, he brings forth a single group as the closest to the created ideal and then, characterises all the others according to their degrees of departures from the original one. Therefore, it can be claimed that Blumenbach’s influence is crucial because of his forming a hierarchical ordering of human diversity which has promoted the rise of racism in the 19th century. The domineering scientific idea of race in 18th century was formed through the scientists’ endeavour to describe the variations of the races according to their own personal investigations and thereby they paved the way for the theoretical developments of the 19th century polygenist arguments of race. The monogenist thought which does not “recognise the existence of pure races” (Haller 1320), gives way, in the 19th century, to the polygenist thought which can be considered as a more racialised debate of the origin human races since it argues for the diversity of human races “taking their diversity from some innately bestowed respective essence” (Asma 6). That environmental factors have primary influence in determining the racial characteristics is also strongly rejected. John Haller emphasises the racist classification of human races by the polygenists who insistently claim that

the Negro was not only a separate species but was also incapable of modification through time. Environmental change, they argued, offered an optimistic palliative, but took no cognizance of the fact that the Negro had remained unchanged through centuries of breeding. Not only his inferior physiological characteristics, but also his social status as a slave, remained unchanged from the time of the Egyptians to the days of slavery in the South. (1322)

As it is clearly observed in this quotation, the monogenist idea dominating the 18th century anthropological account of human origin, loses its credibility in the 19th century with the emergence of polygenism which differs from monogenism in “emphasising the biological inheritance”, that is, the assertion that the racial characteristics cannot be altered by any factor such as climate (Goldberg 364). Thus, the shift of attitude towards

race gives way to the emergence of more racialist scientific evidence to prove the inequality of human races.

⁴ Count Arthur de Gobineau was born in France in 1816 to a bourgeois family (Biddiss 15). However, Gobineau himself claimed to belong to the French nobility and eventually, assumed the title of ‘Count’ which was henceforth associated with him (Biddiss 16). Politically, he had a great “hatred of democracy and of revolution” and tried to show the inequality of human beings as a counter argument to the equality of people developed by the French revolution (Poliakov 53). In the context of polygenist argument, Arthur de Gobineau stands as the prominent figure who has been called “the father of the racist ideology” (Banton 62). As one of the leading polygenists who claim for the fixity of species that do not “naturally cross with other species, except under artificial conditions” (Haller 1322), Gobineau attempted to refute the 18th century idea of race which was determined by environmental conditions. He explained his ideas about race in a work titled *Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races* which bears utmost importance for the development of the scientific theory of racism. He begins his argument by demonstrating the illogicality of Blumenbach’s statement and points out that:

The theory of the unitarians attributes the deviation, as I have already said, to habits, climate and locality. It is impossible to agree with this. Changes have certainly been brought about in the constitution of races, since the dawn of history, by such external influences; but they do not seem to have been important enough to be able to explain fully the many vital divergences that exist. (Gobineau 101)

Gobineau’s concept of race is based upon “innate inequalities among the races of men” (Biddiss 24), a premise which he fervently tries to prove by setting his argument mainly on the physical differences and “the intellectual and cultural inequalities illogically deduced therefrom” (Biddiss 25). In his work, Gobineau, unlike Blumenbach who divides human being into five races, presents three major races of human beings positing the white race at the top and the black race at the lowest. He explains his classification of human races as follows:

Considering it by itself, I have been able to distinguish, on the physiological grounds alone, three great and clearly marked types, the black, the yellow and the white... The negroid variety is the lowest, and stands at the foot of the ladder. The animal character, which appears in the shape of the pelvis, is stamped on the Negro from birth, and foreshadows his destiny. His intellect will always move within a very narrow circle. He is not however a mere brute, for behind his low receding brow, in the middle of his skull, we can see signs of a powerful energy, however crude its objects. If his mental faculties are dull or even non-existent, he often has an intensity of desire, and so of will, which must be called terrible. (Gobineau 133-134)

Hence, the man of the black race is the lowest, featured by animal character and limited intellect, and possessing wild sensuality, energy and desire which are the marks of inferiority. He has no concern for good or evil. The “Negro” does not think of his own life and that of others, in Gobineau’s own words, “this human machine, in whom it is so easy to arouse emotion, shows in the face of suffering, either a monstrous indifference or a cowardice that seeks a voluntary refuge in death” (135). He, further, remarks that it is impossible to attempt to civilize them since they will always remain the same. “The tribes which are savage at the present day have always been so, and always will be, however high the civilisation with which they are brought into contact” (Gobineau 133). After describing the lowest of the human races, Gobineau begins to designate his most favourable race by declaring that everything that is noble and the fruitful in the works of man on this earth springs from the Aryan race which embrace the white races who are “gifted with reflective energy” and are “courageous and ideal” with an “instinct for order, not merely as a guarantee of peace and tranquillity, but as an indispensable means of self preservation” (Gobineau 136). For Gobineau the Aryan race is the purest of all, which is most explicitly seen in the German race, which he explains as “the Germanic race was endowed with all the vitality of the Aryan variety” (Gobineau 170).

Gobineau’s theory of race which gained widespread recognition in the 19th century, found justification in Nazi racism against the Jews. Being a “precursor of Nazi racism”, Gobineau contributed to the “development of Nazi ideology” after his work was translated into German and also to the foundation of the Gobineau society in Germany (Fortier 342).

⁵ Darwin's theory of evolution is based upon the assumption that some races are superior to others and this is because of the fact that, while evolution progresses some races evolve more than the other races, and thus, the differences between races become greater. In the evolutionary stage, the position of "the negro" is "between ape and man" (35). He expresses his ideas about polygenism and monogenism and states that:

Although all such races, as well as all the natural species within the same genus, have undoubtedly sprung from the same primitive stock, yet it is a fit subject for discussion, whether, for instance, all the domestic races of the dog have acquired their present differences since some one species was first domesticated and bred by man. (229)

Although Darwin explicitly states his opposition to all forms of slavery, he thinks that the existence of primitive races who are between the civilised men and the apes, is the most explicit proof of evolution. He attributes certain stereotypes to the black people like "low morality" and "the insufficient powers of reasoning" (97). Furthermore, he points out that:

Most savages are utterly indifferent to the sufferings of strangers, or even delight in witnessing them. It is well-known that the women and children of the North-American Indians aided in torturing their enemies. Some savages take a horrid pleasure in cruelty to animals, and to humanity with them is an unknown virtue. (94)

His ideas about evolution and its racist connotations gained a widespread recognition throughout the 19th century, and frequently used as a scientific justification for the biological inferiority of the blacks.

⁶ Jacques Lacan bases his argument about development and the construction of identity of the self, on the developmental stages of an unborn child till his entering into the realm of language. The first stage that Lacan presents is the real stage, as Lacan calls it a "primordial form" (4). This stage is characterised by the needs of the infant because he is totally dependent on the mother. Lacan also emphasises that this is the form of the "Ideal-I" (2). There is not absence, loss or lack at this stage since it is a total unity with mother. From the "total form of the body" Lacan argues, the child passes into the mirror stage where the child of eighteenth months becomes aware of his difference from his

mother. This is the first hint of the split of the unity of the real stage. Thus, the idea of the self and the other is created at this stage. This awareness of separation from the mother and the reality of the otherness create a sense of loss in the baby so that he demands for reunion with the mother. This demand is for wholeness and completeness. Lacan stresses the fact that, “the mirror stage is a drama whose internal thrust is precipitated from insufficiency to anticipation” (4). The child for the first time experiences a fragmentation in his body. The symbolic stage is the last stage where the child begins to use language. At this stage Lacan claims that: “It is in the *name of the father* that we must recognise the support of the symbolic function which, from the dawn of history, has identified his person with the figure of law” (italics are original) (67). There is no possibility for a total unity with the mother once the child enters into the symbolic stage which submits him into the law of the father. Lacan further argues that the symbolic stage functions as interpellation of the individuals as “subjects” (2). He comments on this and points out that:

it is this moment that decisively tips the whole of human knowledge into mediatisation through the desire of the other, constitutes its objects in an abstract equivalence by the co-operation of others, and turns the I into that apparatus for which every instinctual thrust constitutes a danger, even though it should correspond to a natural maturation. (Lacan 5)

⁷ The poems in *Slave Song* are originally written in Creole. In order to enable the readers to understand the poems better, Dabydeen himself provides the translations of the poems in the Standard English at the end of his book. To comply with the book, both the original and the translations of the poems will be given while analysing them in this dissertation. Additionally, while the poems in Creole are given in verse form, their translations in Standard English are not given in verse form. For this reason, in this dissertation the line numbers will be given for the original poems in Creole, while the page numbers will be given for their translations in Standard English.



Figure 1.

J. M. W. Turner's *Slavers Overthrowing the Dead and Dying*. It is oil on canvas and is on display in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston (<http://www.victorianweb.org>).

⁹ Darcus Howe is a politically active, outspoken writer and social commentator on the issues of racism. Like Linton Kwesi Johnson he was a member of the Black Panther Movement, and currently writes a regular column for the magazine the *New Statesman*.

WORKS CITED

PRIMARY SOURCES

- Dabydeen, David. *Slave Song*. London: Peepal Tree, 1984.
- . *Coolie Odyssey*. Hertford: Hansib, 1988.
- . *Turner*. London: Cape, 1994.
- D'Aguiar, Fred. *Mama Dot*. London: Bloodaxe, 1985.
- . *Airy Hall*. London: Bloodaxe, 1989.
- . *British Subjects*. London: Bloodaxe, 1993.
- Johnson, Linton Kwesi. *Voices of the Living and the Dead*. London: Race Today, 1974.
- . *Inglan is a Bitch*. London: Race Today, 1980.
- . *Tings an Times*. London: Bloodaxe, 1991.

SECONDARY SOURCES

- Aching, Gerard. *Masking and Power: Carnival and Popular Culture in the Caribbean*. Minnesota: Minnesota UP, 2002.
- Adam, Heribert and Kogila Moodley. "Psychological Liberation." *Racism*. Eds. Martin Bulmer and John Solomos. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999. 250-259.
- Althusser, Louis. "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses." *Lenin and Philosophy And Other Essays*. 1971. 1-30. 23.8.2008.
<<http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/althusser/1970/ideology.htm>>.
- Alcoff, Linda Martin. "Toward a Phenomenology of Racial Embodiment." *Race*. Ed. Robert Bernasconi. Oxford: Blackwell, 2001. 267-283.
- Arnold, Guy. *Britain Since 1945*. London: Blandford, 1989.

- Asma, Stephen T. "Metaphors of Race: Theoretical Presuppositions Behind Racism." *American Philosophical Quarterly* 32.1 (1995):1-26. 22.05.2007
<<http://find.galegroup.com>>.
- Bakhtin, Michael. *Rabelais and His World*. Trans. Helene Iswolsky. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1984.
- Balkaran, Stephen. "Mass Media and Racism." 1999. 27.08.2009.
<<http://www.yale.edu/ypq/articles/oct99/oct99b.html>>.
- Banton, Michael. *Racial Theories*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998.
- Barry, Peter. *Contemporary British Poetry and the City*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 2000.
- Beasley, Paul. "Vive La Différence!: Performance Poetry." *Critical Quarterly* 38. 4 (1996): 28-38.
- Beckford, George L. *Persistent Poverty: Underdevelopment in Plantation Economies of the Third World*. New York: Oxford UP, 1972.
- Beneviste, Emile. "Subjectivity in Language." *Identity: A Reader*. Eds. Paul Du Gay, Jessica Evans and Peter Redman. London: Sage, 2000. 39-43.
- Berry, James. Introduction. *News For Babylon: The Chatto Book of West-Indian British Poetry*. By Berry. London: 1984. xii-xxvii.
- Bhabha, Homi. *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge, 1994.
- Biddiss, Michael D. Introduction. *Gobineau: Selected Political Writings*. By Biddiss. 1817. New York: Haper and Row, 1970. 13-35.
- Blackstone, Tessa. "Towards a Learning Society: Can Ethnic Minorities Participate Fully?" *Race Relations in Britain: A Developing Agenda*. Eds. Tessa Blackstone, Bhikhu Parekh and Peter Sanders. New York: Routledge, 1998. 96-110.
- Blumenbach, Johann Friedrich. *The Anthropological Treatises of Johann Friedrich Blumenbach*. 1795. Trans. Thomas Bendyshe. Boston: Milford, 1973.
- Bonnet, Alastair. *Anti-Racism*. London: Routledge, 1999.

- Brathwaite, Edward Kamu. "Nation Language." *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*. Eds. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin. London: Routledge, 1995. 309-313.
- Breiner, Laurence A. *An Introduction to West Indian Poetry*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998.
- Brown, Ruth. "Racism and Immigration in Britain." *International Socialism Journal* 68 (1995). 5.06.2006. <<http://pubs.socialistreviewindex.org.uk/isj68/brown.htm>>.
- Bulmer, Martin and John Solomos. Introduction. *Racism: A Reader*. By Bulmer and Solomos. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1996. 3-17.
- Burns, Gordon. "Margaret Thatcher: TV Interview for Granada." 27.01.1978. 10.9.2007. <<http://www.margarethatcher.org/speeches/displaydocument.asp?>>.
- Bush, Barbara. *Slave Women in Caribbean Society: 1650-1838*. London: James Currey, 1990.
- Cabral, Amilcar. "National Liberation and Culture." *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader*. Eds. Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman. Columbia UP, New York, 1994. 53-65.
- Caesar, Burt. "Linton Kwesi Johnson Talks to Burt Caesar." Interview. *Critical Quarterly* 38.4. (1996): 64-77.
- Carlberg, Heather. "Negritude." 1993. 12.06.2009. <<http://www.postcolonialweb.org/poldiscourse/negritude.html>>.
- Carmichael, Stokely and Charles V. Hamilton. *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America*. New York: Random House, 1967.
- Castells, Manuel. *The Power of Identity*. Massachusetts: Blackwell, 1997.
- Charles, Gerard Pierre. "Racialism and Sociological Theories." *Sociological Theories: Race and Colonialism*. Paris: UNESCO, 1980. 69-83.
- Cheboksarov, N.N. "Critical Analysis of Racism and Colonialism." *Sociological Theories: Race and Colonialism*. Paris: UNESCO, 1980. 347-382.
- Childs, David. *Britain Since 1945: A Political History*. London: Routledge, 2001.

- Childs, Peter. *The Twentieth Century in Poetry: A Critical Survey*. London: Routledge, 1999.
- Cohen, Philip. "It's Racism What Dunit: Hidden Narratives in Theories of Racism." *Race, Culture and Difference*. Eds. James Donald and Ali Rattansi. London: Sage, 1992. 62-103.
- Corcoran, Neil. *English Poetry Since 1940*. London: Longman, 1993.
- Curtin, Philip. "The Africans' 'Place in Nature.'" *Racism: A Reader*. Eds. Martin Bulmer and John Solomos. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1996. 31-34.
- Dabydeen, David. Introduction. *Slave Song*. By Dabydeen. London: Peepal Tree, 1984. 9-15.
- . Preface. *Turner*. London: Cape, 1994. ix-x.
- D'Aguiar, Fred. "Why Ingran is a Bitch?" Introduction. *Ingran is a Bitch*. By Linton Kwesi Johnson. London: Race Today, 1980. 9-10.
- Damme, Wilfried. "African Verbal Arts and the Study of African Visual Aesthetics." *Research in African Literatures* 31.4 (2000): 8-9. Gale <<http://findgalegroup.com>>.
- Darwin, Charles. *The Descend of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1981.
- Davenport, Neil. "Why They Still Fear 'Rivers of Blood.'" 17.03.2008. 5.06.2009. <<http://www.spiked-online.com/index.php?/site/article/4877>>.
- Davila, Michael R. "Oppression and Resistance in Jamaican Reggae and Afro-Brazilian Music: A Comparative Study of Race in Music and Culture." 27.10.2008. <<http://www.uvm.edu/~debate/dreadlibrary/davila.html>>.
- Davis, Helen. *Understanding Stuart Hall*. London: Sage, 2004.
- Dawson, Ashley. "Linton Kwesi Johnson's Dub Poetry and the Political Aesthetics of Carnival in Britain." *A Caribbean Journal of Criticism* 21 (2006): 54-69.
- Depestre, Rene. "An Interview with Aimé Césaire." 1967. 12.06.2009. <<http://www.bandung2.co.uk>>.

- DiNovella, Elizabeth. Interview with Linton Kwesi Johnson. *The Progressive Magazine*. 71.2 (2007): 33-36.
- Dixon, David. "Thatcher's People: The British Nationality Act 1981." *Journal of Law and Society* 10.2 (1983): 161-180.
- Dorey, Peter. *British Politics Since 1945*. London: Blackwell, 1995.
- Draper, R.P. *An Introduction to Twentieth-Century Poetry in English*. New York: St. Martin's, 1999.
- Du Bois, W.E.B. *The Souls of the Black Folk*. 1903. New York: American Library, 1969.
- Eijkelboom, Jan. "David Dabydeen." Trans. Ko Kooman. 27.08. 2007.
<<http://international.poetryinternationalweb.org>>.
- Eldridge, Michael. "The Rise and Fall of Black Britain." *Transition* 74 (1997): 32-43.
- Ernst, Klaus. "Racialism, Racist Ideology and Colonialism, Past and Present." *Sociological Theories: Race and Colonialism*. Paris: UNESCO, 1980. 453-474.
- Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*. Trans. Constance Farrington. London: Penguin, 1965.
- . *Black Skin, White Masks*. Trans. Charles Lam Markmann. New York: Grove, 1967.
- Floyd, Samuel A. *The Power of Black Music*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1995.
- Forbes, Peter. "Critical Perspective: The Poetry of Fred D'Aguiar." 2001. 28.06.2008.
<<http://www.contemporarywriters.com/authors/?p=auth26>>.
- Fortier, Paul A. "Gobineau and German Racism." *Comparative Literature* 19. 4 (1967): 341-350.
- Foucault, Michel. *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings*. Trans. Colin Gordon. Ed. Colin Gordon. New York: Pantheon, 1972.
- . *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. Trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith. London: Routledge, 1972.

- . "History of Systems of Thought." *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews by Michel Foucault*. Trans. Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon. Ed. Donald F. Bouchard. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1977. 199-204.
- . "The Discourse on Language." *Critical Theory Since 1965*. Eds. Hazard Adams and Leroy Searle. Tallahassee: Florida State UP, 1986. 148-162.
- Fredrickson, George. "Social Origins of American Racism." *Racism*. Eds. Martin Bulmer and John Solomos. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999. 70-82.
- Fredman, Sandra. "Combatting Racism with Human Rights: The Right to Equality." *Discrimination and Human Rights: The Case of Racism*. Ed. Sandra Fredman. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2001. 9-44.
- Frias, Maria. "Building Bridges Back to the Past." An Interview with Fred D'Aguiar. *Callaloo* 25.2 (2002): 418-425.
- Fulford, Sarah. "David Dabydeen and Turner's Sublime Aesthetic." *A Caribbean Studies Journal* 3.1 (2005). 22.10.2008.
<http://anthurium.miami.edu/volume_3/issue_1/fulford-daviddabydeen.htm>.
- Gates, Nathaniel E. Introduction. *The Concept of 'Race' in Natural and Social Sciences*. By Gates. New York: Garland, 1997. vi-x.
- Geddes, Andrew. *The Politics of Migration and Immigration in Europe*. London: Sage, 2003.
- Giles, Judy and Tim Middleton. *Studying Culture: A Practical Introduction*. Malden: Blackwell, 1999.
- Gilroy, Paul. *'There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack': The Cultural Politics of Race and Nation*. London: Unwin Hyman, 1987.
- . "One Nation Under a Groove: The Cultural Politics of 'Race' and Racism in Britain." *Anatomy of Racism*. Ed. David Theo Goldberg. Minneapolis: Minnesota UP, 1990. 263-282.
- . *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1993.

- . "Urban Social Movements, 'Race', and Community." *Colonial Discourse and Postcolonial Theory: A Reader*. Eds. Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman. New York: Columbia UP, 1994. 404-420.
- . *Against Race: Imagining Political Culture Beyond the Color Line*. Cambridge: Belknap, 2000.
- Gobineau, Arthur. "Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races." *Gobineau: Selected Political Writings*. 1817. Ed. Michael D. Biddiss. New York: Harper and Row, 1970. 37-162.
- Goldberg, David Theo. "The Semantics of Race." *Racism*. Eds. Martin Bulmer and John Solomos. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999. 362-377.
- Goldberg, David Theo and John Solomos. General Introduction. *A Companion to Racial and Ethnic Studies*. By Goldberg and Solomos. Malden: Blackwell, 2002. 1-12.
- Gosset, Thomas. *Race: The History of an Idea in America*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1997.
- Gould, Stephan Jay. "The Geometer of Race" *The Concept of 'Race' in Natural and Social Sciences*. Ed. E. Nathaniel Gates. New York: Garland, 1997. 1-5.
- Goulbourne, Harry. *Race Relations in Britain since 1945*. London: Macmillan, 1998.
- Gracias, Marian. "David Dabydeen." 5.06.2009.
<<http://biography.jrank.org/pages/4245/Dabydeen-David.html>>.
- Grannuci, Alison. "Linton Kwesi Johnson: Reggae Poet." 5.06.2009.
<<http://www.blueflowerarts.com/lkjohnson.html>>.
- Grant, Kevin. Preface. *The Art of David Dabydeen*. By Grant. Leeds: Peepal Tree, 1997. 9-13.
- Guillaumin, Colette. "The Idea of Race and Its Elevation to Autonomous, Scientific and Legal Status." *Sociological Theories: Race and Colonialism*. Paris: UNESCO, 1980. 37-67.
- Habekost, Christian. *Verbal Riddim: The Politics and Aesthetics of African-Caribbean Dub Poetry*. Atlanta: Cross Cultures, 1993.

- Hall, Stuart. "Cultural Identity and Diaspora." *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader*. Eds. Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman. New York: Columbia UP, 1994. 392-403.
- . *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*. Walton Hall: The Open UP, 1997.
- . "Who Needs 'Identity'?" *Identity: A Reader*. Eds. Paul Du Gay, Jessica Evans and Peter Redman. London: Sage, 2000. 15-30.
- . "Old and New Identities, Old and New Ethnicities" *Theories of Race and Racism: A Reader*. Eds. Les Back and John Solomos. London: Routledge, 2000. 144-153.
- . "Negotiating Caribbean Identities." *Postcolonial Discourses: An Anthology*. Ed. Gregory Castle. Oxford: Blackwell, 2001. 281-292.
- . "New Ethnicities." *Identities: Race, Class, Gender, and Nationality*. Eds. Linda Martin Alcoff and Eduardo Mendieta. Malden: Blackwell, 2003. 90-95.
- Haller, John S. "The Species Problem: Nineteenth-Century Concepts of Racial Inferiority in the Origin of Man Controversy." *American Anthropologist* 72. 6 (1970): 1319-1329.
- Hannaford, Ivan. *Race: The History of an Idea in the West*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University, 1996.
- Harding, Sandra. "Science, Race, Culture, Empire." *A Companion to Racial and Ethnic Studies*. Eds. David Theo Goldberg and John Solomos. Massachusetts: Blackwell, 2002. 217-228.
- Hayter, Teresa. *Open Borders: The Case Against Immigration Controls*. London: Pluto, 2000.
- Healey, Joseph F. *Diversity and Society: Race, Ethnicity, and Gender*. 2nd ed. London: Sage, 2007.
- Heath, Anthony Francis, Roger Jowell and John Curtice. *The Rise of New Labour: Party Policies and Voter Choices*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2001.
- Hebdige, Dick. *Cut 'N' Mix: Culture, Identity, and Caribbean Music*. London: Routledge, 1987.

- Hintzen, Percy C. "The Caribbean: Race and Creole Ethnicity." *A Companion to Racial and Ethnic Studies*. Eds. David Theo Goldberg and John Solomos. Malden: Blackwell, 2002. 475-494.
- Hitchcock, Peter. "'It Dread Inna Innglan': Linton Kwesi Johnson, Dread, and Dub Identity." *Postmodern Culture Version* 4. 1 (1993): 1-25. 6.26.2006 <<http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/postmodern-culture/v004/4.1hitchcok.html>>.
- Ho, Kathleen. "The Caribbean Artists Movement (CAM) and the Trinidad February Revolution of 1970." 2005. 12.06.2009. <<http://www.postcolonialweb.org/caribbean/trinidad/ho2.html>>.
- Holmes, Colin. "Immigration." *Britain Since 1945*. Eds. Terry Gourvish and Alan O'Day. London: Macmillan, 1991. 209-231.
- Hooks, Bell. *Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics*. Boston: South End, 1990.
- Horowitz, Micheal M. Introduction. *Peoples and Cultures of the Caribbean: An Anthropological Reader*. By Horowitz. New York: The Natural History, 1971. 1-13.
- Howe, Darcus. "They Gave us Nothing; Blacks had to Fight for All We Have." *Newstatesman* 4. 12. 2000. 18.07.2008. <<http://www.newstatesman.com/200012040012>>.
- Huk, Romana. Introduction. *Contemporary British Poetry: Essays in Theory and Criticism*. By James Acheson and Romana Huk. New York: State UP, 1996. 1-17.
- Hulse, Michael et. al. Introduction. *The New Poetry*. Eds. Micheal Hulse, et al. London: Bloodaxe, 1993. 15-28.
- Hume, David. "Of National Characters." *David Hume: Essays: Moral, Political, and Literary*. Ed. Eugene Miller. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1987. 197-215.
- Jack, Belinda. *Negritude and Literary Criticism: The History and Theory of 'Negro-African' Literature in French*. US of America: Greenwood, 1996.
- Jackaman, Rob. *Broken English /Breaking English: A Study of Contemporary Poetries in English*. New Jersey: Farleigh Dickinson UP, 2003.

- James, Louis. "The Caribbean Artists Movement." *West Indian Intellectuals in Britain*. Ed. Bill Schwarz. Manchester: Manchester UP, 2003. 209-227.
- Joolz, Denby. "Divide and Conquer: To Perform or Not to Perform, That is the Question..." *Critical Quarterly* 38.4 (1996): 21-27.
- Kavanagh, Dennis. *Thatcherism and British Politics: The End of Consensus?* Oxford: Oxford UP, 1987.
- Kennedy, David. *New Relations: the Refashioning of British Poetry*. Bridgend: WBS Books, 1996.
- King, Bruce. *The Oxford English Literary History*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005.
- King, Stephan. *Reggae, Rastafari, and the Rhetoric of Social Control*. Mississippi: Mississippi UP, 2002.
- Kundnani, Arun. "'Stumbling on': Race, Class and England." *Race and Class* 41.4 (2000): 1-18.
- Lacan, Jacques. *Ecrits: A Selection*. Trans. Alan Sheridan. New York: Norton, 1977.
- Lago, Colin. *Race, Culture and Counselling: The Ongoing Challenge*. England: Open UP, 2006.
- Le Vine, Robert A. and Donald T. Campbell. *Ethnocentrism: Theories of Conflict, Ethnic Attitudes, and Group Behaviour*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1972.
- Lester, Anthony. "From Legislation to Integration: Twenty Years of the Race Relations Act." *Race Relations in Britain*. Eds. Tessa Blackstone, Bhikhu Parekh and Peter Sanders. London: Routledge, 1998. 22-35.
- Letwin, Shirley Robin. *The Anatomy of Thatcherism*. London: Transaction, 1993.
- Levine, Lawrence. "Slave Songs and Slave Consciousness." *Cultural Resistance: Reader*. Ed. Stephan Duncombe. London: Blackwell, 2002. 215-231.
- Ludes, Klaus. "Linton Kwesi Johnson at the Black Panthers." Interview with Linton Kwesi Johnson 1999. 26.04.2008. <<http://www.classical-reggae-interviews.org/index.htm>>.

- Lynch, Philip. *Politics of Nationhood: Sovereignty, Britishness and Conservative Politics*. New York: Palgrave, 1999.
- Mackenthun, Gesa. *Fictions of the Black Atlantic in American Foundational Literature*. London: Routledge, 2004.
- Mair, John. "Guyana Don." *Caribbean Beat* 75 (1994): 1-6 15.11.2007
<<http://www.meppublishers.com/online/Caribbean-beat/issue=75>>.
- Mason, Philip. *Race Relations*. London: Oxford UP, 1970.
- McGhee, Derek. *Intolerant Britain?: Hate, Citizenship and Difference*. England: Open UP, 2005.
- McGuirk, Kevin. "'All Wi Doin': Tony Harrison, Linton Kwesi Johnson, and the Cultural Work of Lyric in Postwar Britain." *New Definitions of Lyric: Theory, Technology, and Culture*. Ed. Mark Jeffreys. New York: Taylor and Francis, 1998. 49-73.
- McIntyre, Karen. "Necrophilia or Stillbirth?: David Dabydeen's *Turner* as the Embodiment of Postcolonial Creative Decolonisation." *The Art of David Dabydeen*. Ed. Kevin Grant. Leeds: Peepal Tree, 1997. 141-158.
- McLeod, John. *Postcolonial London: Rewriting the Metropolis*. London: Routledge, 2004.
- . 'London Stylee!': Recent Representations of Postcolonial London." *Migrant Cartographies: New Cultural and Literary Spaces in Postcolonial Europe*. Eds. Sandra Ponzanesi and Daniela Merolla. Portland: Lexington, 2005. 229-239.
- Miles, Robert. "Recent Marxist Theories of Nationalism and the Issue of Racism." *The British Journal of Sociology* 38.1 (1987): 24-43.
- . *Racism*. London: Routledge, 1989.
- . *Racism after Race Relations*. London: Routledge, 1993.
- Mintz, Sidney W. "The Caribbean as Socio-Cultural Area." *Peoples and Cultures of the Caribbean: An Anthropological Reader*. Ed. Micheal M. Horowitz. New York: The Natural History, 1971. 17- 46.

- Montague, Ashley. *Man's Most Dangerous Myth: The Fallacy of Race*. 5th ed. New York: Oxford UP, 1974.
- Modood, Tariq. "Ethnic Diversity and Racial Disadvantage in Employment." *Race Relations in Britain: A Developing Agenda*. London: Routledge, 1998. 53-73.
- Moore, Brian L. *Race, Power and Social Segmentation in Colonial Society*. Montreux: Gordon and Breach, 1987.
- Morris, Mia and Maureen Roberts. "It is our Black History Month." 3.5.2008.
<http://www.black-history-month.co.uk/articles/bhm_history.html>.
- Muhleisen, Susanne. *Creole Discourse: Exploring Prestige Formation and Change Across Caribbean English-Lexicon Creoles*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2002.
- Mullins, Andee. "Caribbean Creole Language." 14.08.2009. 10.10.2009.
<<http://www.articlesbase.com/languages-articles/caribbean-creole-language-1038181.html>>.
- Newton, Huey P. "The Black Panthers." *The Black Revolution*. Ed. John H. Johnson. Chicago: Johnson Publishing, 1970. 125-135.
- N. n. "Social Darwinism." 2000. 26.10. 2009.
<<http://library.thinkquest.org/C004367/eh4.shtml>>.
- N.n. "Nungu: Ice Apple in English?" 2005. 6.06.2009.
<<http://www.flickr.com/photos/balu/8118586/>>.
- N.n. "Grahame Davies." 2009. 11.12. 2009.
<http://www.grahamedavies.com/english_about.shtml>.
- Niro, Brian. *Race*. Gordonsville: Palgrave, 2003.
- Niven, Alastair. "Bass History is A-Moving: Black Men's Poetry in Britain." *Contemporary British Poetry*. Eds. James Acheson and Romano Huk. New York: State UP, 1996. 293-315.
- Novack, George. "Malcolm X, Black Nationalism and Socialism." *International Socialist Review* 28.4 (1967): 43-51. 11.6.2009.
<<http://www.marxists.org/archive/novack/works/1967/julaug/mx02.htm>>.

- O'Callaghan, Marion. Introductory Notes. *Sociological Theories: Race and Colonialism*. Paris: UNESCO, 1980. 1-36.
- Omi, Michael and Howard Winant. "Racial Formation" *Race Critical Theories: Text and Context*. Eds. Philomena Essed and David Theo Goldberg. Oxford: Blackwell, 2002. 123-145.
- Page, Benedicte. "Inglan's Tap Natch Poet." *The Bookseller* 39 (2002): 29-30.
- Palumbo-Lui, David. "Assumed Identities." *New Literary History* 31.4 (2000): 765-780.
- Parekh, Bhikhu. "Integrating Minorities." *Race Relations in Britain: A Developing Agenda*. Eds. Tessa Blackstone, Bhikhu Parekh and Peter Sanders. New York: Routledge, 1998. 1-21.
- Poliakov, Leon. "Gobineau and His Contemporaries." *Racism*. Eds. Martin Bulmer and John Solomos. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999. 52-56.
- Powell, Enoch. "Rivers of Blood." *The Sterling Times* 22. Apr. 1968. 1-5. 4 March 2007. <http://www.sterlingtimes.org/powell_speech.doc>.
- Procter, James. General Introduction. "'1948' / '1998' Periodising Postwar Black Britain." *Writing Black Britain, 1948-1998: An Interdisciplinary Anthology*. By Procter. Manchester: Manchester UP, 2000. 1-12.
- Quayson, Ato and David Theo Goldberg. "Scale and Sensibility." Introduction. *Relocating Postcolonialism*. By Goldberg and Quayson. Oxford: Blackwell, 2002. xi-xxii.
- "Race." *The Oxford English Dictionary*. Vol. VIII. Oxford: Clarendon, 1933.
- "Race." *A Supplement to Oxford English Dictionary*. Vol. III. Oxford: Clarendon, 1982.
- "Racism." *A Supplement to Oxford English Dictionary*. Vol. III. Oxford: Clarendon, 1982.
- Rawley, James A. *London, Metropolis of the Slave Trade*. Columbia: Missouri UP, 2003.

- Rice, Duncan. *The Rise and Fall of Black Slavery*. New York: Harper and Row, 1975.
- Reeves, Frank. *British Racial Discourse*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1983.
- Rich, Paul B. *Race and Empire in British Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1986.
- Rickford, John R. *Creole Genesis, Attitudes and Discourse*. Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1999.
- Riddell, Peter. *The Thatcher Decade: How Britain Has Changed During the 1980s*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1989.
- Routledge, Chris. "David Dabydeen." 5.6.2009.
<<http://biography.jrank.org/pages/2397/Dabydeen-David.html>>.
- Rowe, Michael. *Policing, Race and Racism*. Devon: Willan, 2004.
- Rozat, Guy and Roger Bartra. "Racism and Capitalism." *Sociological Theories: Race and Colonialism*. Paris: UNESCO, 1980. 287-304.
- Sales, William W. *From Civil Rights to Black Liberation: Malcolm X and the Organization of Afro-American Unity*. Boston: South End, 1994.
- Sandiford, Keith Albert. *Cultural Politics of Sugar: Caribbean Slavery of Narratives of Colonialism*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000.
- Sartre, Jean-Paul. "Black Orpheus." *Race*. Ed. Robert Bernasconi. Massachusetts: Blackwell, 2001. 116-142.
- Scheub, Harold. "A Review of African Oral Traditions and Literature." *African Studies Association* 28.2-3 (1985): 1-72.
- Schipper, Mineke. *Imagining Insiders: Africa and Question of Belonging*. London: Wellington House, 1999.
- Schmitt, Richard. "Racism and Objectification." *Fanon: A Critical Reader*. Eds. Lewis Gordon, T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting and René T. White. Oxford: Blackwell, 1996. 35-52.
- Sharpe, Jenny. *Ghosts of Slavery: A Literary Anthology of Black Women's Lives*. Minnesota: Minnesota UP, 2002.
- Sivanandan, A. "Poverty is the New Black" *Race and Class* 43.2. (2001): 1-5.

- Slade, Ted. "Poetry Kit Interviews Fred D'Aguiar." 1999. 5.06.2009.
<<http://www.poetrykit.org/iv/daguiar.htm>>.
- Small, Stephan. "The Contours of Racialisation: Structures, Representations and Resistance in the United States." *Race, Identity, and Citizenship: A Reader*. Ed. Rodolfo D. Torres. New York: Blackwell, 1999. 47-64.
- Small, Stephan and John Solomos. "Race, Immigration and Politics in Britain." *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 47.3-4 (2006): 235-257.
- Smith, Anthony D. *National Identity*. Reno: Nevada UP, 1991.
- Smith, Anna Marie. *New Right Discourse on Race and Sexuality: Britain, 1968-1990*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994.
- Smith, Paul. "Thatcher and After." *Social Text* 43 (1995): 221-228.
- Solomos, John and Paul Gilroy. *The Empire Strikes Back: Race and Racism in 70s Britain*. London: Routledge, 1992.
- Solomos, John. *Black Youth, Racism and the State: The Politics of Ideology and Policy*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1988.
- . *Race and Racism in Britain*. London: Macmillan, 1989.
- Spencer, Ian R. G. *British Immigration Policy Since 1939: The Making of Multi-Racial Britain*. London: Routledge, 1997.
- Spencer, Sarah. "The Impact of Immigration Policy on Race Relations." *Race Relations in Britain*. Eds. Tessa Blackstone, Bhikhu Parekh and Peter Sanders. London: Routledge, 1998. 74-95.
- Stolcke, Verena. "Talking Culture: New Boundaries, New Rhetorics of Exclusion in Europe." *Current Anthropology* 36. 1 (1995): 1-24.
- Thakura, Srila Bhaktivinoda. Glossary. *Javia-Dharma*. 1989. 7.10.2008.
<<http://www.bvml.org/SBNM/JaivaDharma/42.html>>.
- Talvi, Silja J.A. "The Dub Poetry of Linton Kwesi Johnson." *In These Times* 22.12.2006. 11.5.2008 <<http://www.inthesetimes.com/article/2943>>.

- Thiong'o, Ngugi Wa. *Decolonising the Mind: The Politic of Language in African Literature*. Portsmouth: Heineman, 1986.
- Torres-Saillant, Silvio. *Intellectual History of the Caribbean*. Gordonsville: Palgrave, 2006.
- Travis, Alan. "After 44 years Secret Papers Reveal Truth About Five Nights of Violence in Notting Hill." *The Guardian* 24. 08. 2002. 13.10.2008. <<http://www.guardian.co.uk>>.
- Tuma, Keith. *Fishing by Obstinate Isles: Modern and Postmodern British Poetry and American Readers*. Evanston: Northwestern UP. 1998.
- Türe, Özlem. "From the Root of the Old One: Reconfiguring Individual and Collective Identities in Anglophone Afro-Caribbean Poetry." MA Thesis. METU, October 2007.
- Turner, J. M. W. *Slavers Overthrowing the Dead and Dying*. 2. Nov. 2002. 28. Oct. 2008. <<http://www.victorianweb.org/painting/turner/paintings/slaveship.html>>.
- Unsworth, Clive. "The Riots of 1981: Popular Violence and the Politics of Law and Order." *Journal of Law and Society* 9.1(1982): 63-85.
- Van Dijk, Teun A. "Discourse and Racism." *A Companion to Racial and Ethnic Studies*. Eds. David Theo Goldberg and John Solomos. Massachusetts: Blackwell, 2002. 145-159.
- . "New(s) Racism: A Discourse Analytical Approach." *Ethnic Minorities and Media*. Ed. Simon Cottle. Milton Keynes: Open UP, 2000. 33-49.
- Vora, Erika. "Evolution of Race: A Synthesis of Social and Biological Concepts" *Journal Of Black Studies* 12.2 (1981): 182-192.
- Wa Thiong'o, Ngugi. *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*. Oxford: James Curry, 1986.
- Walker, Klive. *Dubwise: Reasoning From the Reggae Underground*. Toronto: Insomnia, 2005.
- Walvin, James. *Black Ivory: A History of British Slavery*. London: Fontana, 1993.

- Wambu, Onyekachi. "Black British Literature Since Windrush." 1998. 5.12.2006
<<http://www.bbc.co.uk/history>>.
- Weedon, Chris. *Culture and Identity: Narratives of Difference and Belonging*.
Maidenhead: Open UP, 2004.
- Ward, Abigail. "'Words are all I have Left of my Eyes': Blinded by the Past in J.M. W. Turner's Slavers Throwing Overboard the Dead and Dying and David Dabydeen's 'Turner' ". *The Journal of Commonwealth Literature* 42.1 (2007): 47-58.
- Waters, Chris. "'Dark Strangers' in Our Midst: Discourses of Race and Nation in Britain, 1947-1963." *The Journal of British Studies* 36.2 (1997): 207-238.
- Williams, Steve. "The Penguin Book of Homosexual Verse Reviewed: A Diverse Anthology of Gay Themed Poetry Edited by Stephen Coote." 24. 04. 2009.
10.12. 2009. <<http://world-poetry.suite101.com>>.
- Wilson, Amrit. "Brixton Burns." *Economic and Political Weekly* 16.18. (1981): 806-807.
- Wright, Beth-Sarah. "An Exploration of Performance Poetry, Power and Identity Politics in Black Britain." *Black British Culture and Society: A Text Reader*. Ed. Kwesi Owusu. London: Routledge, 2000. 293-313.
- Wroe, Nicholas. Interview with Linton Kwesi Johnson. *The Guardian* 1.5.2008. 1-5.
<<http://books.guardian.co.uk/poetry>>.
- Young, Lola. "Imperial Culture: The Primitive, the Savage and White Civilisation." *Theories of Race and Racism: A Reader*. Eds. Les Back and John Solomos. London: Routledge, 2000. 267-86.
- Younge, Gary. "The Politics of Partying." *The Guardian* 17.08.2002. 13.10.2008.
<<http://www.guardian.co.uk>>.
- Zabunyan, Elvan. "Black Art: The Constitution of a Contemporary African-American Visual Identity." Trans. Catherine Merlen. *A Companion to Racial and Ethnic Studies*. Eds. David Theo Goldberg and John Solomos. Malden: Blackwell, 2002. 423-437.

ÖZGEÇMİŞ

Kişisel Bilgiler

Adı Soyadı : Dilek SARIKAYA
Doğum Yeri ve Tarihi : Gaziantep, 27.08.1976

Eğitim Durumu

Lisans Öğrenimi : Gaziantep Üniversitesi, İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Bölümü

Yüksek Lisans Öğrenimi: Hacettepe Üniversitesi, İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Bölümü

Bildiği Yabancı Diller : İngilizce, Fransızca

- Bilimsel Faaliyetleri : 1. "Representation of Female Poetics in Anne Finch's Poetry"
Epiphany Journal of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Int. University of Sarajevo 3 (2009) :20-30.
2. "Anthropocentrism and Destruction of Nature: An Ecocritical Appreciation of Ted Hughes's *Remains of Elmet*" *Hacettepe University Journal of British Literature and Culture*. 12 (2005):38-52.
3. "An Ecocritical Analysis of George Orwell's Coming Up For Air" *Hacettepe University Journal of Faculty of Letters*. 22.1 (2005): 237-248.
4. "Çevre ve Edebiyat: Yeni bir Edebi Kuram Olarak Ekoestetik" *Littera* 17 (2005): 79-86.
5. "Milton and Hobbes on the Powers of the Monarch and the People" *Hacettepe University Journal of British Literature and Culture*. 11 (2004): 70-82.
6. "Representation of Ideological Hegemony in Richard II" *Hacettepe University Journal of British Literature and Culture*. 11 (2003): 34-46.

İş Deneyimi

Stajlar : İngilizce Öğretmenliği Stajı, Gaziantep Cumhuriyet Lisesi,
2000

Projeler :

Çalıştığı Kurumlar : Gaziantep Üniversitesi, İng. Dili ve Edb. Böl. 2000-2001
Hacettepe Üniversitesi, İng. Dili ve Edb. Böl. 2001-

İletişim

E-posta Adesi : dileksarikaya27@gmail.com

Tarih : 04 Aralık 2009