Mental Distress and the African and Caribbean Diasporas in Twentieth-Century British Fiction

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ABSTRACT

Mental Distress and the African and Caribbean Diasporas in Late Twentieth-Century British Fiction

The history of twentieth-century immigration by the African and Caribbean Diasporas to Britain is a history of mental distress. This thesis focusses on the social elements—conditioned by racism, gender inequities, and colonialism—that cause mental distress in the protagonists of three British novels. The first, Sam Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners*, published in 1956, explores the struggles of single, working-class men of Caribbean and African origin in a hostile, postwar, British environment. The second, Buchi Emecheta's *Second-Class Citizen*, appeared in 1974, at the height of Black Power and amid military rule in Nigeria, the heroine's country of origin; this novel portrays the stress faced by a middle-class, educated woman and mother, in London, within a disintegrating traditional marriage. Caryl Phillips' *Foreigners*, published in 2007, details the depression of three men from three eras of emigration to Britain. The three texts provide a cinematic view into the protagonists' social contexts, including racially problematic housing, jobs, policing, childcare, emotional support, neighbourhoods, and language. Noting that "linking racism to mental health has multiple, inter-related connections" (Chakraborty 131), the authors of a "relatively new approach in deterring the health effects of racial discrimination" find that the "most common outcomes of these studies have been mental health (e.g. depression, psychological distress" (Chakraborty 127). The causes of mental distress may be fully understood in these

novels by following the mental health of the protagonists in their changing environments and timelines.

RÉSUMÉ

La détresse psychologique et les diasporas africaine et caraïbes dans les romans britanniques de la fin du vingtième siècle

L'histoire de l'immigration des diasporas africaine et caraïbes à la Grande-Bretagne est l'histoire de la détresse psychologique. Cette thèse met l'accent sur les éléments sociaux—conditionnée par le racisme, les inégalités entre les sexes, et le colonialisme—qui provoque la détresse psychologique dans les protagonistes de trois romans britanniques. Le premier, *The Lonely Londoners* de Sam Selvon, publié en 1956, explore les luttes des hommes célibataires de la classe ouvrière d'origine africaine ou caraïbe dans un milieu hostile d'après-guerre. Le deuxième roman, *Second-Class Citizen*, par Buchi Emecheta, a été mis en circulation en 1974, à la hauteur de Black Power et au milieu du régime militaire au Nigeria, le pays d'origine de l'héroïne; ce roman met en valeur le stress auquel une femme et mère instruites, de classe moyenne à Londres, au sein d'un mariage traditionnel désintégrant. *Foreigners*, écrit par Caryl Phillips et publié en 2007, présente la dépression de trois hommes de trois époques d'emigration à la Grande-Bretagne. Ces trois romans offrent une vision cinématographique des contextes sociaux des protagonistes, y compris des logements, emplois, maintien émotionnel, maintien de sécurité, garde d'enfants, quartiers et langue, tous problématiques sur le plan racial. En notant que "relier le racisme à la santé mentale a de multiples liens interdépendants" (Chakraborty 131), les sciences sociales en utilisant un "approche relativement nouvelle pour déterminer les effets sur la santé de la discrimination raciale" découvre que "les resultants les plus courants de ces études ont été la santé

mentale (e.g. dépression, détresse psychologique" (Chakraborty 127). Les causes de la détresse psychologique peuvent être pleinement comprises dans ces romans en suivant la santé mentale des protagonistes dans leur milieus changement et historiques.

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Introduction

Mental Distress[1] and the African and Caribbean Diasporas in Twentieth-Century British Fiction

The three novels analyzed in this thesis—Sam Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners* (1956), Buchi Emecheta's *Second-Class Citizen* (1974), Caryl Phillips's *Foreigners* (2007)—all document mental distress in Caribbean and African Diasporic characters at distinct periods and within distinct class and gender structures. *The Lonely Londoners* explores the struggles of single, working-class men of Caribbean and African origin in a hostile, postwar, British environment. Emecheta's *Second-Class Citizen* appeared at the height of Black Power and amid military rule in Nigeria, the country of origin of the heroine; this novel portrays the stress faced by a middle-class, educated woman and mother, in London, within a disintegrating traditional marriage. *Foreigners*, the most recent of the three works under consideration, details the depression of three men from three eras of emigration to Britain.

The history of twentieth-century immigration by African and Caribbean diasporas to Britain is a history of mental distress. Only recently has this distress been scientifically researched. In 2002, studies "confirmed high community prevalence rates of depression in both South Asian and African Caribbean populations, high incidence, and prevalence rates of psychosis in African-Caribbean groups" (Chakraborty 475). These studies also revealed that an "individual's perception of society as racist and the experience of everyday minor acts of discrimination are thought to contribute a chronic stressor" (Chakraborty 475). This research was ex-

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[1] The term "mental distress" is used in this thesis, rather than "mental illness," to underscore the social causes of psychological reactions. "Mental distress" is also preferred because, in some cases, the symptoms of the characters are not clinically identified by the writer (e.g. as depression or psychosis).

panded to include Africans, Chinese, Indians, Pakistanis, and mixed-race immigrant groups living in Britain. In recent years, the risk of suicide has been higher among these other racial groups: "A recent study using National Confidential Inquiry (NCI) data from England and Wales (Bhui and McKenzie 2008) found higher rates of suicide among Black Africans and Black Caribbean men aged 13-24 who had been in contact with mental health services within the preceding year" (Bhui 141). Nonetheless, this research is in its infancy, and there has been little effort to connect racism and mental distress among British immigrants in a historical perspective.

At least until the second half of the twentieth century, Western psychiatry perpetuated racist ideology: "racism…has permeated into psychiatry throughout its development, informing and fashioning its theory and practice" (Fernando 51). The pioneering psychiatrist Frantz Fanon addresses racist ideology in his 1952 literary and psychoanalytic work, *Black Skins, White Masks*, but this work offers a limited history of and social context for mental distress and racism experienced by individuals. Fanon lists the elements of mental distress using personal experience. He grapples with the mental effects of racist language and stereotyping as a body that "move[s] slowly in the world" (Fanon 87). After hearing the words "Look, a negro!" from strangers, Fanon feels the impact of everyday aggression: "I burst apart. Now the fragments have been put together again by another self" (Fanon 82). Fanon's is an existentialist, rather than a historical, approach to expressing mental distress. He hints at the memory of slave-masters' violence when he reacts to these taunts: "All this whiteness that burns me" (Fanon 86) and "I am being dissected under white eyes" (Fanon 87). But it is difficult to grasp from metaphorical statements—"I felt knife blades open within me" (Fanon 89)—anything beyond a few, immediate triggers of distress; we do not learn of Fanon's personal past, nor of his social conditions. He

argues that the black man cannot be simply a man, for he is forced to "be a black in relation to the white man" (Fanon 83), who "unmercifully imprisoned me" (Fanon 85). The black man's psyche is examined as one in a group dominated by another group, not as an individual. Elsewhere in the same text, Fanon relies on the works of Freud, Adler (109), and Jung (111, 112), and the autobiographical novels *Je Suis Martinique* and *Nini* (29, 46) provide psychoanalyses of two protagonists, one a black woman in a relationship with a white man, and the second a black man in a relationship with a white woman. He examines their sexual desires and internalized racism, but he does not investigate their psychic stress. Even late twentieth- and early twenty-first century social psychiatrists have relied on short "case vignettes" and clinical interviews to analyze the causes of an individual's mental distress; these rarely provide a thorough, historic account of the social context in which the patient develops mental distress. These gaps in knowledge suggest that there is a significant role for postcolonial literature to play in relation to present-day social psychiatry.

Post-colonial literature began to historicize the psychological pain of African and Caribbean diasporic immigrants in Britain after the Second World War, in a way that challenged the racist ideology that permeated psychiatry of the time. Some postcolonial texts highlight the elements of racism—racial attacks, racial discrimination, institutional racism, micro-aggression—alongside the development of mental distress experienced by fictional characters. Postcolonial texts can reveal the cumulative psychic causes of familial, regional, cultural, and national histories of protagonists in a way that psychiatric or social scientific works cannot. They can also provide a cinematic view into their social contexts, including details about housing, jobs, policing, childcare, emotional support, neighbourhoods, racist language, and cultural restrictions. These

two qualities of postcolonial literature provide a means of understanding the connection between racism and mental distress. The first quality might be considered as a longitudinal study or history of the individual's psyche; in some cases, as in Philips's *Foreigners*, that history extends from childhood to death. The second quality is the psychological environment inhabited by the immigrant characters—that is, the "world" that they "move slowly in" (Fanon 87). Fanon identifies the mastery over the black man's body and mind as the cause of the "epidemiology of oppression" (Fanon vi): "In the white world, the man of colour encounters difficulties in the development of his bodily schema…It is a third-person consciousness. The body is surrounded by an atmosphere of certain uncertainty" (Fanon 83). The physical vulnerability of the characters in *The Lonely Londoners*, *Second-Class Citizen*, and *Foreigners* turns into, and contributes to, their psychic distress. Together, these two qualities—history and environment—allow one to understand the mental condition of protagonists and characters from an inside view.

A brief study of the postwar period in which *The Lonely Londoners* was conceived—discussed in Chapter 1—is critical to understanding Selvon's subtle display of the mental distress of Caribbean migrants in London. The writer E. R. Braithwaite states that he was "readily seduced into believing myself included in the 'We' of 'We shall fight them on the beaches and in the fields'" (Wambu 15)[2], which proved not to be the case. On 21 June 1948, 492 Caribbeans on board the SS *Empire Windrush*, including veterans, arrived at Tilbury Docks. These migrants, like those who followed them, "came to Britain exercising the international rights of movement" inspired by the war; they approached London as "the hub of an economic empire" (Msiska 8),

[2] A recent Channel 4 News program on Windrush veterans quoted a second-world war BBC reel that verified the welcoming of West Indians into the Royal Air Force: "Today West Indians have common citizenship and common cause with us and they have come here to help us" (Windrush Veterans Channel 4 News).

and they were invited there to participate as equals. The characters in *The Lonely Londoners*, however, find themselves limited by "a slow composition of my self as a body in the middle of a spatial and temporal world"—which is to say the "white world" (Fanon 83). Denied secure work, housing, and support, the most enthusiastic of immigrants, Cap and Galahad, the principal characters in Selvon's novel, succumb to desperate isolation. Cap stops looking for work, is no longer a dandy, does not ask his girlfriend or the 'boys' for financial help, and kills a stray seagull to survive. Galahad stops walking through the city after he loses his job, no longer meets women and, looking with "envy" (Selvon 117) at a well-fed park pigeon, kills one for food. The gradual constriction of their social circumferences reflects their psychic pain.

In *Second-Class Citizen*, Emecheta delves into the psychic and physical destabilization of the family within the racist and socially tumultuous environment of the 1970s. As a Nigerian immigrant in England, Adah, the protagonist, experiences personal and social suffering; her husband, who abuses her, directs his own social suffering against her. Their rented room, both small and single, is an emblem of discord within the family. This discord is partly due to the number of the inhabitants and their lack of basic amenities. Adah's growing, noisy, young family irritates her childless landlords. She is educated, having completed her high school certificate as well as librarian exams, and she finds a "first-class job" (Emecheta 45). She not only seeks a flat large enough to house her children, but also refuses to settle for "second-class" housing that lacks heat and a bath. Yet when Adah finds a suitable two-room location and appears at the landlord's door with her husband, the couple are instantly rejected. Though Adah rarely experiences open aggression, she suffers from the combination of class, gender, and race discrimination within the only place she should find sanctuary: her flat. Thus the rented room in *Second-Class Citizen*

compresses and exacerbates all of the social conflicts in her new country. Routinely beaten and raped by her husband and hospitalized for her third pregnancy, Adah weeps inconsolably, thinks of suicide, and develops psychosis.

Phillips's *Foreigners* depicts the successive breakdown of three gifted British men of African origin—in the eighteenth century, the 1950s, and the 1980s—through the lens of racist language and thought. The reader, by inhabiting the viewpoint of the protagonists' contemporaries, understands the psychic and physical impact of ideas and words that imbue the English language since the slave trade, and that have only been refined and institutionalized over time. Chapter 3 focuses on three lives in *Foreigners*: Francis Barber, a Jamaican-born slave raised in London by Samuel Johnson, the boxer Randolph Turpin, the Welsh-born son of a British Guianese father and a white Englishwoman, and the African stowaway David Oluwale, who arrives in Britain as a bright teenager. After Dr. Johnson dies, Francis is robbed of his inheritance and ignored by the literary circle that had once, for Johnson's sake, treated him as one of their own. Having relocated to Lichfield, where he finds no employment, Barber begins to drink, loses his self-esteem, then dies after years of ill-health. Using a white, upper-class narrator to recount these events, Phillips depicts the slow mental breakdown of a man who, in his youth, had been educated and nurtured for participation in the literary elite. Phillips uses the same method to allow the reader to infer the causes of Turpin's depression and suicide, this time storing clues beneath mid-century journalistic and legal language. Turpin's father is a serviceman to Britain in wartime, but his son, as a successful if troubled boxer, is treated like a foreigner, referred to in court as a "jungle beast in human form" (Phillips 124). Turpin, suicidal in his youth, is charged by policemen for this and his violence toward women, demonized for his convictions by the

press after his boxing defeats, becomes impoverished, then kills himself. Harassed and beaten by the police, the once ambitious David Oluwale is placed in a mental hospital, where he loses his joy for life. He becomes a vagrant. In this thesis, I will demonstrate the link between the continual racist language that Turpin, Barber, and Oluwale experience and their social and institutional limitations.

By surveying a historic diagnosis of mental distress in diverse individuals of African origin who live in Britain, this thesis will explore the unique elements of African and Caribbean diasporic literature that may support traditional medical case studies. While such case studies can offer an inventory of the causes of mental distress, a work of literature allows room for a personal, if inconclusive, diagnosis, insofar as the reader inhabits the emotional life of the protagonist over time. Like Fanon's diagnosis of the "unconsciousness" of colonized men and women in Caribbean literature, the case studies in this thesis will infer from various acts of racial aggression the mental distress of African and Caribbean diasporic protagonists. Finally, the interdisciplinary approach of this thesis unearths, through the lenses of social sciences, history, and psychiatry, the practical knowledge embedded in twentieth-century literary texts, thereby broadening the value of literary studies as a whole.

Chapter 1

What Makes London Lonely?:
Streets, Spaces, and Rooms in Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners*

A brief study of the post-war period in which *The Lonely Londoners* was conceived is critical, as remarked in the introduction, to understanding Sam Selvon's subtle display of the mental distress of Caribbean migrants in London. Much of this distress stems from social instability, though Caribbeans at the time were British subjects. Holding British colonial passports, they were ostensibly free to come and go in Britain. Many Caribbean men, such as Big City and Five Past Twelve in *The Lonely Londoners*, served in the British army during the Second World War. After the war, veterans such as the writer E. R. Braithwaite felt, "secure in the belief that those of the 'We' who had survived the conflict would be welcome participants in the massive task of reconstruction" (Wambu 15). The sense of Britishness among Caribbeans was strengthened by the British in Caribbean schools: "Britain went in to the Caribbean to recruit. They didn't go and pick up Tom, Dick, or Harry. They went to the top schools" (Channel 4 News Windrush Veterans). And "all the schools had a photograph of the Queen. All of them—I'll never forget it—has a big photograph of Trafalgar Square. And when I first went to England, I couldn't wait to see Trafalgar Square" (Channel 4 News Windrush Veterans). This text addresses the connection between racism and mental distress in West Indian immigrants to Britain, with a distinctness representative of some of Frantz Fanon's studies of the language and psyche of West Indians.

On June 21, 1948, the 492 Caribbeans on board the SS *Empire Windrush*, including veterans, arrived at Tilbury Docks. This was "the first ship bringing home the people of Empire from

their peripheral margins to the metropolitan centre itself" (Wambu 20). These migrants, like those who followed, "came to Britain exercising the international rights of movement" (Msiska 7) inspired by the war. They approached Britain "as the hub of an economic empire" (Msiska 8), and they were purportedly invited there to participate as equals. The newcomers, believing this, were like "Dorothy arriving at the castle of the Wizard of Oz" (Wambu 22); that is, they were "in search of a missing part of ourselves, which we believed had been stolen" (Wambu 22). Their longing for a new, whole, equal life was both economic and emotional, for, "in the Caribbean, the immigrants prided themselves as British citizens" (Usongo 181). Their long-cherished images of Britain and thoughts of a new country inform the yearning and crushing disappointment of the immigrant characters in *The Lonely Londoners*; they did not anticipate the systematic exclusion that caused their mental distress.

Most of the immigrants were working-class Caribbeans who did not feel as invested in the nationalist project in the Islands after the war as middle-class Caribbeans were.[3] The "discourse of nationalism" was "the primary mode in which the West Indies has thought about itself since the early decades of the twentieth century" (Forbes 1). From the 1950s to the 1970s, the nationalists, supported by the Caribbean "literati" (Forbes 30), promoted the "ideal West Indian citizen as educated and rationalistic" (Forbes 49). Some "working-class men felt completely distanced from the nationalist project" (Forbes 50); hence "the first great wave of migration of working-class West Indians took place at the height of nationalism" (Forbes 50). This was "arguably a sign of the different agendas of middle-class nationalists and the mainstream of the people: the

[3] While the decolonization of the Caribbean began in the early nineteenth century, the Anglophone West Indian national movement took place from the early twentieth century onward and was a movement of independence from social and cultural imperialism (Forbes 1-2, 30).

one was more political, the other more economic" (Forbes 50). Middle-class immigrants "tended to migrate temporarily, in search of educational advancement, by which they hoped to assist in national development on their return" (Forbes 50). Working-class arrivals were the most likely to see in the great metropolis of London a personal rebirth, and therefore embraced the "economic empire": "lower-class West Indians were often more concerned with individual or familial survival, and more often than not were unable to return" (Forbes 50) to the West Indies. Their mental distress in Britain was intensified by this inability to "go home," and compounded by the fact that they were made to feel unwelcome.

After West Indian immigrants began to arrive in Britain, they realized that there was significant resistance to their presence from white Britons. Some whites exhibited "imperial arrogance one minute to excruciating self-pity the next" (Wambu 20). They resented their postwar economic dependency on and legal equality with colonized men and women. Britain was suffering "employment shortages" (Usongo 180) and "dependent on the productive labour of others" (Msiska 8). It also found the independence of India "alarming" (Usongo 182) and used Caribbean immigration as a means to "abort attempts to decolonize its colonial holdings" (Usongo 182). The invitation to West Indians was both a psychological and a material tactic. Britain "was recovering from an exhausting and ruinous war, which had sapped her will to hold on to her former possessions" (Wambu 20)—specifically, India and Pakistan—and needed black bodies to support its damaged economy. With the Nationality Act of 1948, West Indians were welcome to live and work in Britain, but it has been argued that this Act, permitting immigration from British subjects, was meant to "ensure frictionless travel for the large white populations of Canada and Australia" (Gentleman) rather than for black Caribbeans. There arose a public debate on whiteness

and Britishness. The Nationality Act "was predicated on a concern with both the mercantile management of the colonies as a source of resource extraction and export consumption as well as with the maintenance of a system of racial segregation that would allow the definition of English ethnicity and English whiteness to continue against that of the colonial "other"" (Usongo 182). Though there was a "changing conception of settler British identity in the era of decolonization" (Attewell 5), a dark thread of eugenic theory flourished in Britain after the Second World War: "British eugenicists did concern themselves with the problem of a racially diverse national body" and applauded political efforts "of keeping out bad blood" (Attewell 12). Selvon records the immigrants' awareness of British resistance to their presence, and the stress and insecurity this causes to Moses, who is asked to help many of them settle: "the English people starting to make rab about how too much West Indians come to the country…big discussion going on in Parliament…big headlines in the papers every day" (Selvon 2).

Even if one accepts the idea that West Indians were encouraged to immigrate to Britain, it is clear they were not being offered social equality; they were invited as workers, especially as unskilled workers, removing some of the best students and skilled workers from the Caribbean in an extension of the British parasitic colonial and slavery systems. The "slave's existence was economic, commodified" (Forbes 33); the Caribbean immigrant was valued by Britain, not because of his citizenship, but for his manual labour in the postwar economy. He was seen not as an individual in the London metropolis, but as one of many "numbers" or "elements which, in themselves, are indifferent, but which are of interest only insofar as they offer something objectively" to the "money economy" (Simmel 326). While the Caribbean was diminished by the "loss of skilled labour" (Usongo 191), such as that of Galahad and Cap in *The Lonely Londoners*,

Britain supplemented its unskilled labour; “Black workers were consistently downgraded and deskilled following their arrival in Britain” (Dawson 37). Tragically, there were “many promising immigrants who experience frustration and rejection in the Western world and end up mad or committing suicide” (Usongo 191).

The simmering resentment of white Britain exploded in August 1958. The Notting Hill riots, triggered by a marital dispute between a Jamaican man and his Swedish wife, were followed by violent marches demanding that Britain be kept “white.” Those who feared the presence of Caribbean immigrants included Winston Churchill. In cabinet papers dated February 3, 1954, Churchill “expressed alarm about an influx of coloured people” and suggested that “[p]ublic opinion in UK won’t tolerate it once it gets beyond certain limits”; the Home Secretary followed this by noting that the population had risen to 40,000 Caribbeans (from 7000 during the Second World War) and by discussing the possibility of excluding “riff-raff” (Smith). After the Notting Hill riots, “Oswald Mosley’s Union Movement circulated leaflets and held public rallies in the area. The perils of miscegenation featured prominently” (Dawson 28). Such thinking was widespread; the National Labour Party leader John Steel suggested that, with more immigration, “We will be a nation of half-castes” (Dawson 28). By 1962, the British government passed an Immigration Act “designed to limit or stop immigrants from coming to Britain” (Usongo 182), specifically to “keep ‘coloured’ citizens out” (Selvon xi). Published in 1956, two years before the Notting Hill riots, the resentment faced by the characters in *The Lonely Londoners* is powerful if silent, built into the spaces, streets, institutions, and social rejection they encounter. The novel itself is considered by some as an “intervention in an increasingly racist public sphere” (Dawson

31). Part of this intervention is the depiction of mental distress of West Indian immigrants to Britain.

The Windrush generation did not initiate the first black community in Britain, though the detractors of immigration depicted black Caribbeans as aliens and intruders. There was fear of the presence of Blacks in London during the Elizabethan era. William Shakespeare's *Othello* was, "in part, inspired by the presence of Black people in sixteenth-century London" (Msiska 6). The Queen twice ordered the deportation of Blacks, saying there were "divers blackmoores…of which kinde of people there are allready here to manie" in England, the last of whom had "crept into this realm" from slave-ships headed for Portugal and Spain (Bartels 305). Gustavus Vassa and Francis Barber, among others, arrived in England in the eighteenth-century as Caribbean slaves, and were later active as literary figures in London. Eighteenth-century Black Londoners worked as "servants, hairdressers, and musicians, mostly" (Msiska 6). There were prominent Black Londoners in the nineteenth century, such as the writer Joseph Johnson. Yet the Caribbean men and women who arrived of the SS *Empire Windrush,* most of them working class, were seen as a threat to white Britons of all classes. By the public these twentieth-century Caribbeans were viewed as a "financial burden" (Usongo 194), perhaps because, as free British subjects, they were needed economically, and they posed a threat to the very notion of whiteness. In spite of attempts to remove it from Britain, "Black metropolitan subjectivity…has endured across centuries" (Msiska 5).The similarity of Queen Elizabeth's view to that of some 1950s Britons is staggering and psychologically puzzling. Given the long history of blacks in England, it is unclear what the particular novelty of the arrival of the Windrush generation was to white Britains, other than that this time they had legal status as British subjects and were rivals to white workers.

The erasion of the black British history in public discourse was part of eugenic ideology and, in contributing to a hostile environment for Caribbean immigrants, was an element in their social suffering in Britain.

Caribbean immigrants had already suffered one great rupture in their forced migrations from Africa (as slaves exported in the Middle Passage), and from India and China (exported as indentured workers) (Forbes 32). Even after Emancipation, slaves experienced the physical and psychological suppression of planters: "The planter's aim was to return the ex-slave to the twilight gaze of social death" (Forbes 61). Arguably, this same aim may be found in the suppression faced by the characters in Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners*. One researcher calls the double rupture faced by West Indian immigrants "*Double Diasporasation* (Hall 1990)" (Msiska 6), linking it to W. E. B. Dubois' theory of the "double consciousness," that causes alienation and a psychological split in the colonized mind: "the Black subject is a partial subject, contracted to a self preordained by dominant ideology" (Msiska 17).

A significant cause of this contraction is the colonial ideology expressed in buildings, streets, and spaces, including spaces of travel. We see this double consciousness in Selvon's characters in *The Lonely Londoners* at the Waterloo station. The "old Waterloo is a place of arrival and departure" (Selvon 4), socially and psychologically unstable: "is a place where you see people crying goodbye and kissing welcome" (Selvon 4). Selvon's ironic focus of the word "Waterloo"—a battle won by British general "Wellington and his allies," but "surrounded by ambivalence and distortions" (Norton-Taylor)—as the entry point of a generation of social soldiers is deliberate. Just as the Battle of Waterloo cost both the English and the French great losses, so does it become more uncertain, as the text progresses, whether the arrival of the immigrants is a

triumph or a loss. Moses, watching the Thames, ruminates on his ten years in London; he and his people are caught like eddying water in a timeless, universal, "swaying movement that leaving you standing in the same space" (Selvon 138). The Waterloo Station, as both a place of entry and exit, of those in the present going forward into an imperial past, creates circularity; the station opens the novel, while the Thames closes it, signifying both the universality and the unfulfillment of the mid-twentieth century West Indian immigration to London. While in the metropolis "the individual gains a freedom of movement" (Simmel 332), his "private life was suppressed" to such an extent by "the formation of social life and the concrete institutions of the State," that his "personality can…scarcely maintain itself in the face of it" (Simmel 338). The suppression of the Caribbean immigrant's personality in London is all the more intense, and results in mental distress, because his skin colour is one of the objective elements that factor into the labour and social life within the money economy.

On arrival in the Waterloo Station, the immigrants experience a subtle conflict with white Britons via the appearance of an aggressive, if superficially polite, reporter. Tolroy's Jamaican family emerges from the boat-train and is assailed by a reporter from the *Echo*. The reporter demands to know why the immigrants have chosen to come to Britain; given that West Indians are British subjects, this question is itself an act of aggression, one that instantly draws a line between "we" and "you." The reporter goes on to ask questions that hint at the economic and social threat posed by the immigrants: "can you tell me why so many people are leaving Jamaica?" (Selvon 10) and "what will you do in London?" (Selvon 11). On requesting a photograph of the immigrants, he adds drily, "one of you alone will be quite sufficient" (Selvon 11). These questions are not real. Uttered in posh, official English, they are exclamations of alarm at

the status of West Indians as British subjects, some of whom serve as British soldiers, and who have the right to work and live in Britain; they are signs of the limited physical and psychological space offered to the immigrants. Moses, who has lived in London for a decade, tells the reporter that he came to Britain only to escape from a hurricane. From long experience, he has learned that his mere presence in London is questionable for many Britons. An unpaid conductor for West Indian immigrants, he is sent to greet Henry Oliver Esquire (dubbed Sir Galahad by Moses); he goes to Waterloo Station and ushers the Trinidadians away from the reporter as he might part a sea. Tolroy, who is established in London, refuses to speak to the reporter, and tells his aunt, Tanty, "Don't tell the man anything" (Selvon 10). Both he and Moses know that they are not welcome by many Britons.

But the voluble Tanty ignores Tolroy and chats with the reporter, her first contact with a white Londoner. By doing so, she fans the worst fears of those Britons who see the immigrants as economic rivals: "And to tell you the truth, when I hear Tolroy getting five pound a week, I had to agree" (Selvon 11). She also unwittingly suggests that she will be the stereotypical "financial burden" to the country by admitting that she herself will not work: "I come to look after the family…Who will cook and wash the clothes and clean the house?" (Selvon 11). The reporter does not understand that this form of domestic support adds to the financial and social independence of the family. Or if the reporter does understand this, he does not want the immigrants to feel that he understands. In spite of her friendliness and the family's compliance for a photograph, the reporter's last words are uttered "maliciously" and exhibit his racial prejudice: "I hope you don't find our weather too cold for you" (Selvon 12). Like a sea-monster who rises to bite Moses's people, the reporter is neither named nor described. He is not an individual, but a mem-

ber of the press and therefore an institutional figure. He stands for official London, and is almost a disembodied voice that, with its disapproval and power, hems the West Indians in and isolates them. The impersonal language he uses stands in stark contrast to their creole warmth, and is meant to repel them. This relation with white Britons is repeated throughout the text; each time one of the characters attempts "to fight for a psychic and physical space" (Msiska 12), he is caught and flung back into this psychic cell by racial prejudice.

The coldness in Britain that the reporter alludes to, and which eventually settles on the immigrants, is not primarily climatic but psychic and physical. The long-acclimatized Moses feels much colder in the British winter than does Galahad, who seems on his arrival at the station to emanate the warmth of Trinidad. He thinks his new country is not cold: "This is a nice climate, boy. You feeling cold?" (Selvon 13). He brings no overcoat or hat with him: "he think he back home in Port of Spain" (Selvon 15). He is the most high-minded and tough character in the text, a skilled worker who arrives without luggage or warm clothes, but with great curiosity and energy; for his idealism, Moses tags him "Sir Galahad." Galahad peppers Moses with questions about his new environment: "the train stopping often. Why is that?" and "Why they call it Bayswater? Is a bay? It have water?" and "What is that in the gas corner?" (Selvon 16). As one who has worked in the oilfields in Point-a-Pierre, and who is trained as an electrician, Galahad has great potential to contribute to the British economy, especially during labour shortages. He is not idle; he searches for work on the second day of his arrival, tries to save money, and takes an interest in politics (Selvon 129).

Galahad is also interested in the storied areas in London. He believes that the metropolis is as limitless for him as it is for white Britons. Once he obtains work, he proves fascinated by the

"big clock they have on Piccadilly Tube Station" (Selvon 72), and he often visits the Piccadilly Circus. He exults in this metropolitanism: "Jesus Christ… 'Charing Cross,' when he realize that is he, Sir Galahad, who going there…he feel like a new man" (Selvon 72). He "using the names of the places like they mean big romance" (Selvon 71), notes Moses. Galahad recalls the films and books he had enjoyed in the West Indies. While Moses broods over the fact that "we can't get no place to live, and we only getting the worse jobs it have" (Selvon 8), Galahad asks Moses if he "remember that picture *Waterloo Bridge*" (Selvon 73) and goes to the bridge and watches the river to relive the film. The city is alive in his imagination, and he is himself brought to life by a culture which he thinks he shares equally with white metropolitans. These historic squares, streets, and stations make London real to Galahad because they have been sung in the colonies since the slave trade began; even former slaves such as Gustavus Vassa published work about eighteenth-century London and "various layers of British society" (Msiska 6). But Galahad is not made equal to the white metropolitan, or *flâneur*, by his mere presence in London. He is the *Blaneur* — a black *flâneur* — because there is a "living tension" between "his racialised metropolitan identity and his universal identity" (Msiska 9). The notion of the *flâneur*, as understood in eighteenth-century European thought, has an identity "primarily shaped and determined by the forces of the city" (Msiska 9). But, as a *Blaneur*, Galahad's newness, his remade identity, is that of a colonized being.

M. H. Msiska argues that, "metropolitan London itself was inextricably linked to the international transatlantic Slave Trade" (Msiska 6); the freedom of movement (by white Europeans), and the mingling of peoples of diverse classes and countries in one large city, was inextricably linked to the slavery economy. Linked to the slave economy of the eighteenth-century

metropolis were the "feudal social relations of the West Indian slave plantation" (Msiska 6). Hence the *flâneur* of the eighteenth century is "essentially imagined as White within a universalist ideology" (Msiska 9). This approach to the metropolitan "will later confine the specificity of Black urban culture to the ghetto" (Msiska 9). Hence the instinctive metropolitanism of characters such as Galahad, Cap, and Big City, who delight in the age and variety of their new city—haunting Trafalgar Square, Piccadilly, Marble Arch, and the Piccadilly Circus, as though their own ancestors had walked them—does not give these men the same freedom as it does to whites. This clash between the freedom of the metropolis and the racist social net within it causes the pathos of the West Indian characters in Selvon's text: "for the city powerfully lonely when you on your own" (Selvon 29). The impoverished streets in which the immigrants live are microcosms of both the vastness of the metropolis and the coldness of the unwanted: "It have people living in London who don't know what happening in the room next to them…London is a place like that. It divide up in little worlds, and you stay in the world you belong to" (Selvon 60). The metropolis seems to offer a "new identity" (Msiska 6). This view is echoed by Galahad's statement that by walking through historic streets he feels "like a new man" (Selvon 72). At first he feels this "newness" is universal: "'Charing Cross'…just to say he was going there made him feel big and important" (Selvon 72). The city's unfamiliarity gives him a "feeling of loneliness and fright" (Selvon 23). But it is "to stand up and watch the white people" (Selvon 72) that gives him a false sense of belonging, a citizen among citizens, to a multiracial universe, and this false sense of security is a sign of his double consciousness. Even after time and familiarity he is not permitted to be "new" by white metropolitans and by the very structures of the metropolis. For one thing, he is not allowed to apply for a job that suits his experience and education; secondly,

he is forced into a ghetto; thirdly, even with his heroic temper, he is assailed by cold white Britons; fourthly, he has no family and is not permitted the money and social environment sufficient to create one.

Being brought in to supplement unskilled labour during a post-war crisis, Galahad is seen by the metropolis as a tool and not a citizen, and this ultimately affects his psyche. Moses wants to warn Galahad: "We can't get no place to live, and we only getting the worse jobs" (Selvon 8). He advises him "where to go and where not to go" (Selvon 19). Galahad ignores him, sets out by himself the next morning, and is instantly disoriented. For out on the street "everybody look so busy he frighten to ask questions…Everybody doing something or going somewhere, is only he who walking stupid" (Selvon 23). The vastness and speed around him, "the unexpectedness of violent stimuli" (Simmel 325) in the metropolis, temporarily rob him of his youthful confidence. He begins to wander around, lost, increasingly worried. Then he stands still to contemplate his surroundings, dizzy with its strangeness, and is immediately accosted by a policeman: "Suddenly Galahad feel a hand on his shoulder" and "he hear a voice say: 'Move along now, don't block the pavement'" (Selvon 24). Galahad is not even permitted to stay in one spot long enough to get his bearings. He is forced to "hustle" wherever he goes. The policeman is, like the reporter, nameless and faceless, and his speech is comprised of the clichés of power and officialdom. When Galahad begins to stammer with fright, the policeman becomes less threatening and says, "Can I help you to get some place?" (Selvon 24). Though he hardly knows Moses, he is deeply relieved when he shows up to help. Yet Galahad is accosted again, this time by a faceless, nameless bus conductor: "'Ere, you can't break the queue like that'" (Selvon 25). Moses leads Galahad to the employment office, where another nameless and faceless Briton, this time a clerk in the Ministry of Labour,

questions him: “What work can you do?” (Selvon 26). When the clerk hears the word “electrician,” Galahad is told there is no such work available and sent to another building to register; like Galahad, the Nigerian Cap is never given the kind of work he seeks (as a storekeeper) and can do, but only causal and unskilled manual labour (Selvon 34, 35). On his first half-day in London, Galahad is told where he cannot stand, cannot line up, and cannot work; isolated by those in positions of power, he is not once made to feel welcome or even tolerated by white Britons.

The language used by the “official” Britons echoes the language of the West Indian masters in the slave plantations. Impersonal and authoritative, this language contributes to the mental distress faced by the characters. To master the colonizer’s language is to possess “the world expressed and implied by that language” (Fanon 9); the “Negro of the Antilles” and “every colonized man,” including those most fluent in the colonizer’s language, “has always to face the problem of language” (Fanon 9). For “[e]very colonized people—in other words, every people in whose soul an inferiority complex has been created by the death and burial of its local cultural originality—finds itself face to face with the language of the civilizing nation; that is, with the culture of the mother country” (Fanon 9). As do the reporter and the policeman, the clerk addresses Galahad only as a product that requires storage or purchase; the clerk does not view Galahad as a British subject with a right to the road. (Interestingly, these three figures of power are made as gender neutral as possible; the word “he” is never used for the policeman, and appears only once for both the reporter and the clerk.) The language of these “official” Britons is the “good English” that the anglophile Harris expresses with desperation, and that alienates most of Selvon’s characters, who speak creole English. Fanon, describing his own experience of this

language, argues that the black man's "inferiority comes into being" (Fanon 83) through such language "spoken officially" (Fanon 17): "I have made a point of observing such behaviour in physicians, policemen, employers" (Fanon 19) which "make him angry" by "classifying him, imprisoning him, primitivizing him, decivilizing him" (Fanon 20). Selvon's characters are alienated by this language, in part, because the "official" Britons use the "old English diplomacy" (Selvon 20) that conceals their feelings, as when the reporter wishes the arrivals an ironic "good luck" with the cold climate of their new country. Moses says: "over here you don't see any, but when you go in the hotel or the restaurant they will politely tell you to haul or else give you the cold treatment" (Selvon 21). In *The Lonely Londoners*, it is not clearly suggested that the sense of exclusion of the characters stems in part from their usage of a dialect born of slavery. But the writer Jean Rhys, who was born in the British West Indies and spoke Caribbean-English, recalled in her later life how she was mocked in London for her "lilting" accent and, in 1901, "kicked out of the Academy of Dramatic Arts in London" (Piepenbring). By contrast, the use of "good English" by the official Britons in Selvon's text destabilizes his characters, puts them on guard, heightens their insecurity, fills the space they are in with memories of the slave-master relationship.

Selvon embodies these memories by removing all possible personal qualities from the reporter, the policeman, and the clerk. These memories are elements of the double diasporasation of West Indian immigrants, who were first brought forcibly from Africa to the Caribbean, then migrated from the Caribbean to Britain: "If Stuart Hall conceives of Black British identity as a *Double Diasporasation* (Hall 1990), particularly in relation to subjects of Caribbean origin, then one can argue that this second Diaspora is here imagined and figured as the promise of freedom,

unlike the earlier one, from African to the Caribbean, that had been enforced and in which there was no room for the migrant to assert his or her agency in terms of choice of destination" (Msiska 6). These suggestions of the distant slave-master relationship are introduced in the text so that the reader—who might otherwise read from "the language of the colonizer" (Usongo 183)—is forced to see things from the perspective of the colonized immigrants. Galahad and Moses both react with fear to, respectively, the policeman and the reporter, out of inherited fear of the master; Galahad, who has been in London for a day, yet knows "people does feel in Trinidad when police near them, as if, even though they ain't commit a crime, the policeman would find something wrong that they do and want to lock them up" (Selvon 24). The public spaces these men inhabit are infused—in officials, monuments, billboards, films, places of entertainment—with a language that emphasizes their rejection, and cumulatively adds to their mental stress.

By contrast, creole English creates a fluid, creative space in which West Indians can communicate freely as equals. Creole English is an "English spoken…that included many elements of French and West African patois" (Dawson 33). According to some, it "can be defined as language that, "appropriates elements from the master-codes of the dominant culture" (Usongo 184). While Fanon has pointed out that the "middle-class in the Antilles never speaks Creole except to their servants" (Fanon 10), it is a means of achieving some power for the working classes, and for Selvon's characters, within a dehumanizing system. As a language developed by slaves, it is a "code language" (Wyke 32) and a "form of disguise and defence and as a means of coping" (Wyke 40). As a language "forged in the context of the systematic emasculation administered by the institutions of racial slavery" (Dawson 32), it permits Selvon's men to re-masculate

themselves from the aggression of the English used by 'official' Britons. Selvon's linguistic innovations, such as "forceripe" (Selvon 93) and "oldtalk" (Selvon 134), contribute to Creole, a "style of expression that distinguishes [the West Indians] from the British people" (Usongo 199). But the spaces in which their Creole interactions can flourish is limited to snatched exchanges in rooms, parties, streets, and parks. It is absent from the public sphere, which is dominated by the language, art, and images of the colonizer.

Adding to these daily harassments and dismissals are other factors that limit the movement of Selvon's characters in London. They have too little money to live anywhere other than in a single, rented room, which restricts their social lives. They cannot think of living on certain streets; they are permitted in the "Working Class," "grim" areas of Harrow Road and Notting Hill, and cannot afford "rich" areas such as Belgravia, Knightsbridge, and Hampstead (Selvon 59-60). The dilapidated, poorly maintained area on Harrow Road where Tolroy and his family live is described as decrepit: "The houses around here are old and grey and weatherbeaten, the walls cracking like the last days of Pompeii, it ain't have no hot water…none of the houses have bath…Some of the houses still have gas light" (Selvon 59). Even if an immigrant has managed to find a room, he must struggle with the lack of basic health-related amenities such as hot water, bath, and ventilation, which contributes to his mental condition; this condition can only worsen in the winter, and if the tenant cannot find a job. Many landlords in 1950s London, even in working-class areas, routinely refused black tenants. As one veteran, Herbie Providence, remarked on Channel 4 News: "You were often greeted with signs like 'No blacks, no dogs, no Irish'" (Channel 4 News Windrush Veterans). In *The Lonely Londoners,* the characters "are denied access to decent housing and restricted to menial jobs" (Usongo 182). The menial jobs offered to Galahad,

Cap, and Big City, all skilled workers, force them to compromise on the size and quality of their dwellings.

Those of the immigrants in Selvon's text who obtain secure jobs still do not obtain mentally secure lives. The light-skinned Bart, who acquires a position as a clerk, and Moses, who works in a factory, are the only ones who win secure employment. Neither is able to make enough money to buy property. They both have, like all of Selvon's immigrant characters, experienced a "disruption of social networks" which "decreases an individual's capacity to cope with psychosocial stress" (Murray 54). Lacking a real home, Bart longs for security through his dream girl, a white woman named Beatrice, while Moses yearns for Trinidad. Cap, unable to find work that meets his level of education and experience, chooses to leave one menial job after another and hops from one rented room to another; he focusses on his dandyism and dating white women. Unlike Moses or Galahad, he is the "mimic man" (Msiska 20) who "identifies absolutely with the dominant metropolitan culture" (Msiska 20). Instead of profiting from this mimicry, he ends up without a room of his own. In his homelessness, Cap "epitomizes the erosion of moral norms" (Usongo 191), leaving each room after he no longer can pay the rent and cheating lovers of their money and goods. His "dire need" drives him to a desperate desire to "affirm his sense of manhood" (Dawson 38) by manipulating women. This desperation springs, also, from being "haunted by the spirit of his father in Nigeria" (Usongo 192), who had provided him with money to complete his law degree. While homeless and jobless, he still "attempts to recreate the aesthetics of the white middle-class men" (Usongo 191) by seducing white women and engaging in the nineteenth-century metropolitan "dandyism" (Msiska 7) of the *flâneur*. He is not alone, as Harris also seeks validation through white Englishwomen, whom he also dehumanizes; Fanon has ex-

pressed this psychology of the colonized as "the desire to be suddenly white," adding "who but a white woman can do this for me?" (Fanon 45). Though Cap attempts to copy the colonizing white man, he is what Usongo calls a "parasitic flaneur" (Msiska 19). By the end of the text, he is no longer the dandy-about-town, but a Captain lost at sea, "so hungry that his head giddy" and "remembering the times when fortune favour him" (Selvon 131). He lures seagulls into his room with bread, and eats them for several weeks, until he is once more evicted. By eating the seagulls he "recover his strength" (Selvon 133), so when he left the place where the seagulls had been plentiful, he "cast a sorrowful glance upward when he was leaving" (Selvon 133).

Though Galahad is not a "mimic man," but a person full of "grandcharge" (Selvon 90), he is reduced to the same position as Cap. Regardless of Galahad's grandeur, his efforts at remaining employed, and his warmth toward even those Britons who despise him, he is made to feel shame if he dares to step out of his psychic and physical ghetto. One day, "cool as a lord," with a "plastic raincoat hanging on the arm," he approaches others "bowing his head in a polite 'Good evening' and not giving a blast if they answer or not" (Selvon 75). It was a night "when it look like night would never come…rent finish paying, rations in the cupboard, twenty pound in the bank, and a nice piece of skin waiting under the big clock in Piccadilly Tube Station" (Selvon 76). Night does, however, come, and swiftly; the big clock he is so fond of, as dependable as the tides on the Thames, proves to represent the "highest impersonality" (Simmel 329) of the metropolis. A woman with a child, perhaps emblems of the family he thinks of having in the future, responds to his friendly greeting with a "sickly sort of smile" and Galahad, "knowing how it is," turns away; the child had previously pointed him out as a "black man!" and, upon Galahad's patting her cheek, "cower and shrink and begin to cry" (Selvon 76). Fanon describes a similar ex-

pression of racial prejudice in “The Fact of Blackness”; someone shouts at him, “Look, a Negro!”, and he declares he is “sealed into that crushing objecthood” (Fanon 82). Depressed by both child and mother, Galahad internalizes this racism and laments his skin colour. He is thus flung from his early evening joy to the despair of double consciousness: “‘Colour, is you that causing all this, you know. Why the hell you can’t be blue, or red or green, if you can’t be white? You know is you that cause a lot of misery in the world. Is not me, you know, is you!’” (Selvon 77). This psychic pain he feels is built into the metropolis, which “confines the Black subject not only physically but also mentally” (Msiska 23).

The “nice piece of skin” is temporarily forgotten by Galahad beneath the blinding light of racial prejudice. The absence of wives, mothers, and sisters in the private lives of almost all of the immigrants, due in part to their “very difficult jobs” (Msiska 17), contributes to their social and mental instability: they “gradually lose the beliefs and mores promoting social cohesion and kinship of the cultures, from which they originate” (Msiska 18). The majority of Selvon’s men engage in the dehumanization of women, particularly the white woman: she is “the vap” (Selvon 40); the “number” who “was a sharp thing” (Selvon 40); “a frauline” (Selvon 71); “the skirt” (Selvon 73); “a craft” (Selvon 73); “pretty pieces of skin” (Selvon 92). The white woman is depicted as a consumer good in “bags of white pussy in London” (Selvon 79). Galahad, with Daisy amid a disapproving crowd in the tube, remarks “must be bawl to see black man so familiar with white girl” (Selvon 79). Besides providing the sense of instant whiteness suggested by Fanon, this dehumanization of white women “ends up mirroring the forms of violence that characterize white supremacist patriarchy” (Dawson 36). Confronted with the “institutional racism of the color bar in housing and employment” (Dawson 34), Selvon’s male characters rely on “mas-

culine self-aggrandizement," "misogyny, and homophobia" (Dawson 34) to cope. Black women, too, are also dehumanized within this homogeneous male community, but in a different way. Tanty, the character who most stabilizes the community by supporting her family and participating in both English and Caribbean life, is mocked by the young Caribbean men: "Old people like you, you only come here to make life miserable" (Selvon 57); Harris, at his party, attempts to preserve his status among the English guests by avoiding Tanty. The immigrants' denigration of their feminine social support stems from self-denigration and weakens their mental well-being. Lewis—the only man in the text who arrives from the Caribbean married and accompanied by his wife, Agnes—viciously and routinely beats her when in London. He "resorts to unprovoked domestic violence" (Dawson 44) because he is fearful of her new liberty in the metropolis: "Still Lewis worried and imagining all kinds of things happening to the wife while he hustling in the factory" (Selvon 55). Finally, he "put on such a beating on Agnes that she left him for good" (Selvon 55). Lewis is "biting his fingers" and feeling "panic" (Selvon 56), then a month later "get in with a little thing and he forget all about married life" (Selvon 57). In the London metropolis, argues Simmel, "the individual whose own private life was repressed to such an extent that he could compensate himself only by acting as a despot in his own household" (Simmel 333). The pressure from the metropolis on Selvon's male individuals is even more intense, leading to instability in their private lives, loneliness, and psychic pain.

Dawson has described the relationship between Selvon's men as "homophobic bonding" (Dawson 34). There are no significant queer characters in the text, though Moses engages in a conversation with a "pansy" (Selvon 99) and Cap has a sexual encounter with a transvestite (Selvon 40); Moses's own sexuality is ambiguous. The "boys" are not a culturally or reli-

giously diverse group either. Thus the focus in the novel is less about the personal relationship of individuals than about the relationship of a small colonized group of immigrants to the dominant culture. Their housing is circumscribed by areas inhabited by another marginalized group, working-class Britons. Selvon tells us little about the relationships the male immigrants have with others in their individual buildings and their neighbourhoods. Part of their loneliness is to be found in the conservatism and lack of diversity in their lasting social lives. By contrast, the protagonist Jonnie in Salkey's *Escape to an Autumn Pavement* develops relationships, painful, offensive, and joyful, with a diverse group of fellow tenants. Used for sex by the white partner, Fiona, of his working-class, racist landlord, the middle-class Johnnie falls in love with Dick, a male tenant: "So I'm playing with Fiona and being happy with Dick" (Salkey 115). He engages in competitive confrontations with another middle-class immigrant, the Indian female student Shakuntala Goolam. Published four years after *The Lonely Londoners*, Salkey's text reveals the rich, complex private life of immigrants in London, one that does not strictly polarize black and white, rich and poor, and which investigates the psychological effects of class and gender within a racist context.

Though gallant, pure, and hardworking, this Sir Galahad is not offered a chance to search for the Holy Grail. During a cold and financially depressed winter, Galahad, jobless, resorts to killing a park pigeon on Trafalgar Square in order to survive. He is assailed by yet another white Briton, once again nameless and faceless, a pigeon-lover who is oblivious to his need: "'I must find a policeman!' the woman screech" (Selvon 119). Galahad does not this time notice the colonial glory of Trafalgar Square; he sees in it only a park with pigeons similar to those in a park in Trinidad: "It used to have pigeons like stupidness all about the street—nobody know where they

come from, and Galahad father used to snatch and send them home to cook" (Selvon 117). The battle on this Trafalgar Square is between the West Indian hero and the colonial prerogative that values a bird more than a black man. Safe in his room, Galahad cooks the pigeon and invites Moses to join him for a meal. Galahad says to Moses, after questioning him about possible jobs: "when you not working you does feel bad" (Selvon 121); his imaginary London has been shot to the ground, a dead pigeon. Moses "watch Galahad with sorrow, thinking that he ain't have no work and the winter upon the city" (Selvon 124); he tells Galahad that, after ten years battling in London, "I just lay there on the bed thinking about my life, how after all these years I ain't get no place at all, I still the same way, neither forward nor backward" (Selvon 124). This sense of in-surmountable repression, and "all the years of suffering" (Selvon 124) that lead to nothing, is in strong contrast with the jubilant entry in Waterloo station that begins the novel.

After all the "hustle" of the "boys" around the city in the text, they huddle in Moses's room; after they leave, Moses delivers a kind of elegy to his immigrant friends, as though they were long past and were now interred. His room is the only place where they can get together on Sundays, in groups of five or six, at peace, without being insulted, harassed, or threatened. They go there in yearning of what they cannot have: "Sometimes, after they gone, he hear the voices ringing in his ear, and sometimes tears come to his eyes and he don't know why really, if is homesickness or if is just that life in general beginning to get too hard" (Selvon 136). They go there to tell them about the racism they experience, and Moses sees that they can only say this "lock up in a small room"; they cannot shout it out loud, and that room is their psychic cell. Moses hears their suffering so often that he can no longer bear it: he wants to say, "Get to hell, why the arse you telling me about how they call you a darkie, you think I am

interested?" (Selvon 137). The constant aggression aimed at the men can only be confessed among their fellow immigrants; the Windrush veterans cite it sixty years later in the Channel 4 News, confirming the psychic scars that remain: "I was rudely awaken by shouts of 'nigger' or 'black bastard' or whatever—and I suddenly realized life was going to be difficult" (Channel 4 News Windrush Veterans). In Moses's small room, these warriors arrive with wounds that are caused by the structures of the metropolis.

In "The Metropolis and Mental Life," Simmel notes the metropolitan's challenge to "preserve the autonomy and individuality of his existence in the face of overwhelming social forces, of historical heritage, of external culture, and of the technique of life" (Simmel 324). Selvon effectively displays the "technique" to marginalize his characters by limiting them to certain spaces, streets, positions, and social lives. Each begins with a strong, distinct personality and background, but is driven by the end into one sort of space, job, and lifestyle; the "techniques," which are like whips to the mind, include racist language, micro-aggression (such as what Selvon identifies as "old English diplomacy"), and systematic impoverishment. W. E. B. Dubois also investigated "the impact of race on urban identity" even earlier than Simmel, in *Black People in Philadelphia* (1899), noting "the sorrow and bitterness that surround the life of the American Negro" (Dubois 396). He emphasizes to white readers, with irony Selvon might appreciate sixty years later: "one is not compelled to stare at the solitary black face in the audience as though it were not human" (Dubois 397). Neither of these thinkers focus directly, however, on the impact of the combination of race, migration, and urbanization on mental distress, as does Selvon.

It was in the 1930s, and alongside studies of psychosis, that links have been made with urbanization, migration, and psychosis: "incidence of psychosis is high amongst migrant

groups" (Murray 58), including Norwegian migrants to America. In particular, the "disruption of social networks decreases an individual's capacity to cope with psychosocial stress" (Murray 54). Recently, in 1988, the "most striking findings have come from the UK, where numerous studies have reported an increased incidence of psychosis among African-Caribbean people" (Murray 58) in a way not shown by African-Caribbeans living in the Caribbean. In 1999, research emerged arguing that, "Racism (overt and institutionalized), social isolation and reduced social networks may contribute" (Murray 62) to psychosocial stress. The characters in Selvon's novel, by the end, all exhibit psychosocial stress, expressing their loneliness, hunger, and experiences of overt and institutionalized racism. The most powerful portraits of this psychic stress in Selvon's text involve the characters' "hustling" from space to space looking for a place to live in isolation, seeking work they do not desire, fleeing officials and white Britons who do not want them in their country.

Chapter 2

Double Colonization in the Home: The Causes of Adah's Breakdown in *Second-Class Citizen*

Second-Class Citizen was published eighteen years after *The Lonely Londoners.* During that period, race relations in Britain changed—not for the better. While Britain "was an early and energetic importer of foreign labor after World War II," the country was later "the first of the major immigrant-receiving states of Western Europe to initiate aggressive and successful efforts to curb its flow" (Messina 259-260). Together with Polish servicemen and Irish immigrants, West Indians in the 1940s and 1950s were invited to settle in Britain to help fill "labor shortages and other structural impediments to economic growth" (Messina 261). But "black immigrants also witnessed the passage of a series of patently racist immigrant laws in the course of the 1960s" (Dawson 51), after the race riots of the late fifties. Several of these laws, beginning with the Commonwealth Immigration Act of 1962, were "designed to curtail" new Commonwealth Immigration using the "labour-voucher system" (Messina 263), under which non-white immigrants could only immigrate if they had established the right to work in Britain. This political tightening increased through the 1960s and the 1970s, perhaps because, in Britain, "there was no significant national civil rights movement by the late 1960s" (Dawson 51). Some have argued that the "racial hostility toward non-white immigrants" was instigated in the interests of "political elites" rather than by citizens (Messina 265), which might explain the institutional racism black immigrants, such as Adah and Francis in *Second-Class Citizen*, faced in Britain. Conservative Party member Enoch Powell's infamous "rivers of blood" speech in 1968 was directed specifically against immigration by blacks. The Immigration Act of 1971 included additional

regulations restricting the arrival of wives and husbands of immigrants. Gender discrimination was blatant in the racist Acts; though black women had been working in Britain since the 1940s, they were not permitted, until 1974, to bring husbands into the country due to a "long-standing discrimination preventing women from sponsoring a Commonwealth husband" (Hutton 21). In 1973, scholars Castle and Kosack argued that the racially aggressive restrictions in these Acts had been "harmful economically" (Messina 265). Yet another racially aggressive immigration Act appeared in 1981, this time forbidding the right of abode to British-born individuals unable to "prove that their parents or grandparents had been British citizens" (Attewell 196). Nadine Attewell exposes the thread of eugenic thinking in post-Empire views of "the reproductive body as a locus of national imagining and state action" (Attewell 4); these views are exhibited in the social systems that constrain the lives and mental states of Adah and Francis Obi in *Second-Class Citizen*. Chapter 2 will address the connection between racism and the mental distress of African Diasporic immigrant protagonists, representing the distinctness (and limitations) of the popularized psychiatry of its period.

Black British society developed methods of combatting these constrictions. In 1965, activist Michael X, who had witnessed the riots at Notting Hill, created the Racist Adjustment Action Society (RAAS); with 45,000 members at its peak (Hunter), RAAS was "Britain's first Black Power organization" (Dawson 52). These legal constrictions to immigrants were coupled by increasing racial violence by "members of the neofascist National Front" (Dawson 52), which "at the 1979 general elections…was able to mobilise more than 300 candidates, polling nearly 200,000 votes" (Brown). In 1979, the black feminist group Organization of Women of African and Asian Descent (OWAAD), deriving from Black Power and the African Students' Union

(ASU), was created. In spite of the influence of Black Power and other movements on the minds of black women in Britain, this growing social battlefield may not have been materially significant in the lives of immigrants like Adah in *Second-Class Citizen*. The struggle of ordinary black women, argues Dawson, "took place not through organized political groups but around issues of family and social reproduction" (Dawson 108); black women in Britain "often turned to their families for shelter from racist hostility" (Dawson 117) rather than to political organizations. The lack of familial support in Britain proves to be a key cause of Adah's breakdown. Emecheta states in an interview that the "main issue" she faced as a black immigrant in Britain was "the fact of racism" (Schipper 190) and that the "problem of the black woman is racism, not sexism" (Sougou 53), though the problems faced by her Nigerian female characters, including Adah, result from gender bias both in Nigeria and Britain. While in Nigeria Adah, though oppressed, has enough familial and social support to maintain psychic well-being.

In general, it was difficult for black individuals to find their social and psychological needs addressed in either British society or British leftist organizations. In July 1967, the racial limitations and "parochial character" (Dawson 50) of the British Left were revealed in a speech by Stokely Carmichael (Kwame Ture), one of the few black people invited to attend the "Congress of Dialectic Liberation." The congress was hosted by a group of psychiatrists that included R. D. Laing and was meant to "link the internalized violence said to be characteristic of psychotic mental illness with the mentality which fuelled the US war in Vietnam" (Dawson 49). In one of the most important events in "Black Power in the Transnational Frame," Carmichael asked: "How could a conference organized around the notion of individual alienation shed any light on the circumstances of black people, who are exploited and despised as a class?" (Dawson 49). The

same question might be asked of black women, who are "exploited and despised" as a class within two other exploited classes. The impact of racism on the psyche seems hardly to have been considered by 1970s social psychiatrists such as R. D. Laing.

Emecheta's novel is innovative in that it explores the mental condition of the black female individual within a racist social context, at a time when this issue was rarely if ever broached by British institutions, activists, or scientists. The treatment of mental distress began in the late nineteenth-century, when Emil Kraepalin "started the scientific understanding of mental illness in a real sense" (Ebert and Bar); unfortunately Kraepalin viewed certain racial groups, such as the Javanese, as a "'psychically underdeveloped population' akin to 'immature European youth,' and looked to ways of racial-cultural comparison as a method of scientific study" (Fernando 40). The mental condition of women was, similarly, understood during the nineteenth century as determined by "women's physiology" and her "nature" as a mother (Kulkarni 1285). In the early twentieth-century "women began to become a central cultural figure as the symbol of linguistic, religious, and sexual breakdown" (Kulkarni 1285) and were "over-represented in the number of asylum inpatients" (Kulkarni 1286). Though psychiatry began to be popularized in the mid-twentieth-century, Freud "adhered to racist thinking" and Jung "integrated racist ideas more fully into psychological theories" (Fernando 42). While the racism of Jung's work was recognized in the late 1980s by Farhad Dalal (Fernando 45), Western psychiatry as a whole maintained racist thinking about black people through the second half of the twentieth century. Social scientists "emphasized the effects of racial discrimination and social conditions on the lives of black people" but this work often offers "derogatory images of Blacks," as though they developed "personal defects" from "living in a sort of cultural vacuum" (Fernando 46). There was little discus-

sion of the link between depression, psychosis, and suicide in black people—or, still less, in black women—to racial discrimination and social conditions. Kulkarni has noted that "diagnostic criteria were not operationalized until the 1970s" and "Mental hospitals began to be downsized by the late 1970s, in the United Kingdom" (Kulkarni 1286). Around this time there were attempts to identify the psychosocial causes of depression: in 1978, the British social scientists G. W. Brown and T. Harris, working with psychiatrists, published *Social Origins of Depression: A Study of Psychiatric Disorders in Women*. Emecheta explores these issues in her autobiographical novel, and makes it unique by venturing into both the racialized and gendered social causes of Adah's breakdown. Adah struggles against both the racial ideology inflicted on black immigrants and the misogynist ideology dispensed in both Nigeria and Britain. In her isolated, urgent attempt to overcome both ideologies, Adah suffers intense mental distress.

Adah's mental distress, arguably, begins with the educational and social barriers she faces after her completion of high school, enforced by both traditional Nigerian norms and by colonial ones. Even as a child, Adah wants nothing more than to go to school. She is grateful when the police force her parents to educate her; as a teenager, she notes she is "very happy in the Methodist Girls' School" (Emecheta 23) and with the missionaries who teach her there. This abiding ambition is linked to the "struggles of imperialism" (Dawson 59), and it "encouraged exclusivism" (Nath 3); education is the best way for young Adah to join the "Ibo elites" (Emecheta 25). Adah's distress in Nigeria, as it is in Britain, is worsened by her limited choices of space: "To read for a degree…one needed a home" (Emecheta 23). Even if Adah scrapes up enough money to rent a room of her own to continue her studies, "teenagers were not allowed to live by themselves" (Emecheta 23); the colonial educational system in Nigeria seems not to have ac-

counted for single women over the age of 18. Tradition in Nigeria, in which "schooling for girls was discouraged" (Nath 4), and the limited colonial educational system, jointly oppressed ambitious, educated, but poor girls: "the education in colonial Nigeria, as in India, sought to suit Indigenous peoples' to serve the colonialists' needs" (Nath 3) rather than their own. (A university-educated, "elite" girl might find time to agitate against the colonialists.) Adah's family's attitudes are allied with the colonial limitations on education for Nigerian girls, for they are clearly unwilling to support her desire for higher education. Her immediate family taunts her that she could have "continued her education and become a doctor" (Emecheta 27), but "nobody talked of who was going to support her, nobody talked of where she was going to live" (Emecheta 27).

Adah eventually rejects not only her biological family, but also her marital joint family and, finally, her marriage, because none of these support her desires for intellectual and social freedom. None support her personal wish to live a "first-class" life, however much they benefit from her "first-class" jobs. But these rejections trigger successive psychic instabilities. The colonized "individual who climbs up into society—white and civilized—tends to reject his family" (Fanon 115) and their traditions. Accordingly, that individual risks the trauma of racial isolation. The stress of these cumulative ruptures contributes to Adah's mental distress, for "the family structure is cast back into the id" (Fanon 115). Fanon quotes Joachim Marcus on the psychic effect of the family structure: "The family structure is internalized in the superego and projected into political [though I would say social] behavior" (Fanon 115). This structure allows the individual to connect with and feel both intellectual and social freedom in her society. Within the colonized context, the social system wars with the family system, casting it "back into the id"—that is, into the primitive, unstructured, unconscious mind. This war has further psychic implications if the colo-

nized individual is, like Adah, a woman and of working-class background. Adah knows as a child that "she was such a disappointment to her parents, to her immediate family, to her tribe, nobody thought of recording her birth. She was so insignificant" (Emecheta 7). Emecheta "challeng[es] the oppressive aspects of certain African traditions" toward women, exposing "her childhood alienation from her family's ancestral tradition" (Nath 5), and "her classism forces her into a self-imposed exile from the working-class Nigerians" (Dawson 103). Her psychic isolation is multifaceted, even in Nigeria.

Adah is denied either institutional or family aid to grasp the one thing she longs for over everything else: a university education. But the stress of establishing a home in Nigeria is coupled, for Adah, with the stress of losing even the slightest independence, such as that Adah experienced as a resident student at the Methodist Girls' School. For, Adah reflects, "she needed a home" (Emecheta 40), and she has to marry to get one. Adah notes that her marriage is "the saddest day" of her "whole life," and "she was sad, very sad, for months after the marriage at the register office" (Emecheta 24). This sadness is a precursor to the racial and gendered sadness she experiences in London, the sadness of not having a home of her own. Another psychological stressor for the teenaged Adah in Nigeria is the necessity of having children: in Africa, Emecheta notes, "you are nowhere as a woman without children" (Schipper 191). A woman has either "the role of being a mother or a whore" (Schipper 189); independence is unthinkable.

The now eighteen-year old Adah fuels her frustration into her aim of joining the "Ibo elites, just like Lawyer Nweze of Ibuza" (Emecheta 25). She eventually "congratulated herself on her marriage" (Emecheta 23) because, with a young man who cannot "pay the five hundred pounds of the bride-price," she thinks she will have the leisure to "go on studying at her own

pace" (Emecheta 23). She also believes that he will one day be a "made man"—that is, a wealthy man, a man in the elite (Emecheta 23). All of this seems possible in Nigeria. Though the "African woman has always been dependent on the family" (Schipper 190), "African women have always worked" (O'Neill 226). After filling out many forms, Adah wins a prestigious position as librarian at the American Consulate Library, which provides her with so immense a pay that her husband serves as her bodyguard on paydays. Now "[a]ll Adah had to do was to go to the American library, work till two-thirty, come home and be waited on hand and foot, and in the evening be made love to" (Emecheta 26). She has their first child, and she is doted on by her parents-in-law and sisters: "A woman would be forgiven everything as long as she produced children" (Emecheta 26). Francis is delighted at the birth, his face bright with "warm sunshine" (Emecheta 25). Their joint family[4] is in cohesion with its society: family and society "turn on the same axes" (Fanon 115) and "the characteristics of the family are projected into the social environment" (Fanon 110), like trees in a forest. Dreaming of their future in Britain, Francis imagines a day when he "would finish his accountancy and Adah would read librarianship" at university (Emecheta 25). She is "beginning to love" her husband (Emecheta 27). Though Adah's traditional joint family limits her ambitions, it nurtures and supports her enough that she does not become depressed, as she does in Britain.

In spite of her successes in Nigeria, Adah remains restless and dissatisfied. She feels "cheated" and abandoned by the indifference of her biological family, for her mother has died and her brother "never visited her" (Emecheta 27). She dislikes the constraints of the joint fami-

[4] joint family: a consanguineal family unit that includes two or more generations of kindred related through either the paternal or maternal line who maintain a common residence and are subject to common social, economic, and religious regulations (Merriam-Webster).

ly, in which the "decisions about" her own life are referred "first to Big Pa, Francis's father, then to his mother, then discussed among the brothers of the family before Adah was referred to" (Emecheta 27): she was "forced into a situation dictated by society in which, as an individual, she had little choice" (Emecheta 27). She imagines that she will have greater choice by moving "to new surroundings, a new country, and among new people" (Emecheta 27). But Francis first resists this, obeying his father's wishes. Adah notes that Francis "was an African through and through" because he thinks London is "just like Lagos" (Emecheta 28). With a sense of superiority, the young Adah adds, "his outlook on life was pure African. He had had little opportunity of coming in contact with Europeans as Adah had" (Emecheta 28). Like many colonized individuals, Adah "identifies…with the explorer, the bringer of civilization, the white man" (Fanon 114); this identification in Adah's case is strengthened by the fact that she is denied her wish for higher education in Nigeria. Educated by colonials, she is "on guard before any conflictual elements have coalesced round" her (Fanon 112). "African" is a bad word for the young Adah, one that stands in opposition to the Europeanized man, who is for her "a much more civilized man" (Emecheta 28). At this point in her life, Adah does not recognize the corruption and hypocrisy of the colonial and neo-colonial elites, such as the wealthy lawyer Nweze, whom she admires: "Nweze ended up a millionaire himself. Adah still wondered how that happened, because the millionaire was jailed for forging notes in his great palace" (Emecheta 26). Nor does she guess how dangerous their influences on her will prove. Believing in the inherited colonial system, Adah wishes to be a "been-to"—that is, one who has been to England—and insists that her children "have an English education" (Emecheta 37). These desires are the result of a colonized environment which "magnified differences" and "engendered discordant sentiment of infe-

riority and superiority" (Nath 3). At the same time, because Adah's status and mental well-being are dependent on a strong, traditional family structure, Emecheta further "problematizes the debate of tradition versus modernity" (Nath 5). The tension between her traditional family structure and her new society contributes to her mental breakdown.

Adah begins her life in Britain with a feeling of deep disappointment and loneliness. Her "isolation is evident as soon as she sets foot in Britain" (Dawson 102). Fanon has said that "a normal Negro child, having grown up within a normal family, will become abnormal on the slightest contact with the white world" (Fanon 111). The same may apply to African parents who arrive in London, for both Adah and Francis judge each other to have changed for the worse. Adah's husband, after a year as a student, is insistently English when he greets her coming down from her ship as a "very new Francis" (Emecheta 36). To her shock, he kisses her in public, "with everyone looking" (Emecheta 36). When he makes a joke about death that she finds odd, he states: "In England, people make jokes of everything" (Emecheta 36). Alone with this new "English" Francis, Adah is immediately destabilized. She is doubly destabilized when it becomes clear that Francis's "Englishness" is a thin veneer. Rather than adopting English standards within the home, Francis intensifies his privileges as a Nigerian son and husband. After Adah suggests he is lying about the jokes that the English tell, he angrily responds: "This separation of ours has made you bold" (Emecheta 36). When Francis takes her home and she sees the small, bare room she and her child will share with him, she is once again shocked, and reproaches her husband for not having done better. He ignores her at first, then, after several more complaints, threatens to beat her. Francis "thought better of it" because "[t]here would be plenty of time for that" (Emecheta 39); he is "free of the restraints by the extended family" and "there is little to

rein in Francis's abusive behaviour" (Dawson 103). Adah "crumpled" (Emecheta 39) and "recoiled into her shell" (Emecheta 41). She silently echoes his own public reproach of her boldness: "He would not have dreamed of hitting her at home because his mother and father would not have allowed it" (Emecheta 39). But she suffers an even worse retaliation. Before he forces himself on her, Francis slashes her hard-earned Nigerian sense of status: "You must know, my dear young *lady*, that…the day you land in England, you are a second-class citizen" (Emecheta 39). Francis strengthens his male privilege in Britain by demonstrating to Adah that, in her new country, she loses not only the presence of her culture and family, but her class privileges. During a few hours in Britain, Adah is silenced, insulted, threatened physically, and raped.

Adah's nuclear family is wrenched from its organic society and battered by its new one. Adah receives a "cold welcome" (Emecheta 36), not just from her husband and the "remote," "aloof" English (Emecheta 36), but from the strange diversity of her new neighbours: "the other tenants returned from the factories where they worked…she saw that she had to share the house with such Nigerians who called her madam at home" (Emecheta 38). When she examines the accommodation that Francis has acquired for them, Adah is appalled by its "flattened out… Nigerian class system" (Dawson 102) that will force her to share facilities with these working-class men and women: "All postcolonial Africans are thrown together as second-class citizens" (Dawson 102). Francis bitterly explains to Adah, on her first day in London, that "in England the middle-class black is the one that is lucky enough to get the post of a bus conductor" (Emecheta 39-40). The London building stands in stark contrast with the spacious, comfortable, and loving marital home that Adah had enjoyed in Nigeria. There, Adah reminds herself in Lon-

don, she was “waited on hand and foot” (Emecheta 26) by her sisters-in-law, and doted on by her in-laws. She wonders “why she had not been content with that sort of life” (Emecheta 26).

Adah’s mental well-being is dependent on safety in the home and on her freedom to fulfill her family’s physical and social needs. When Adah ventures out of the home, it is always with the aim of meeting such needs; she does not once trouble with the historic places frequented by many of Selvon’s “boys.” She quickly acquires a job as a librarian, becomes pregnant again, and ends up taking care of her children after work. At first, her student-husband reluctantly stays at home with them during the day. Adah is obliged to cook for them, shop for them, dress them, wash them, and take them to doctors: “Francis was only good at giving her children, nothing else” (Emecheta 56). She reminisces about the comforts of her traditional, privileged home in Lagos: “At home in Nigeria, all a mother had to do for a baby was wash and feed him…in England, looking after babies was in itself a full-time job” (Emecheta 46). Tired of helping Adah with the children, Francis asks her: “Who is going to look after your children for you?” (Emecheta 45). Adah “could sense the suppressed anger,” and she “was frightened” (Emecheta 45). It is no wonder, then, that she does not “care what you do,” for her priority is to “have my children whole and perfect” (Emecheta 64): “Francis was dissatisfied” with what he calls her “frigidity” (Emecheta 40) and “started shopping around outside for willing women” (Emecheta 41). The fear of physical and emotional abuse in the home is reflected in her psychosis and psychotic behaviour prior to her third child, when her passivity toward her husband is described in detail.

Adah, who suggests that her missionary education has “civilized” her away from the African mindset she sees in Francis, clings to her Nigerian marriage. This is partly because she

has “no surrogate kins to turn to for support” (Dawson 103). She also still adheres to an ideology in which “mother” is privileged over “woman” (Lewis 38), and “that stresses woman’s self-denial and inferiority” (Lewis 40). After her second child is born, she resists having more children. Yet “[so] defeated is she by Francis’s accusations that Adah submits herself to yet another pregnancy” (Dawson 104). She weakens, in part, because she is unaware of her legal and reproductive rights and, in some ways, has few. In accordance with the Immigration Act of 1971, Adah is permitted entry only as his dependent: “To leave Francis would mean possible deportation” (Dawson 105). Brutalized and insulted in her own home, Adah loses her psychic energy by the time she has her third child, for “male-female relationships” are “often the cause of most mental ailments that might be diagnosed in women” (Siwoku-Awi 6195). Every time Adah attempts to improve her personal life, Francis amplifies his violence and emotional abuse. She does not dare to leave him as yet, or even tell anyone about his abusive behaviour, for the “educated African woman is even much more seriously castigated for a non-conformist stand” (Siwoku-Awi 6202).

Adah’s mental instability, which begins after the birth of her second child, reflects the instability of her rented room within a racist and misogynistic social structure. This room is not an empty space, like those of Selvon’s characters, but the epicentre of a familial and social battleground. This discord is partly due to the size and activity of a family of three cramped into a room that Buchi describes as “very small” and “a half-room” with “a single bed” (Emecheta 38). The room is porous, surrounded by other people who add to Adah’s familial conflict. Adah’s growing family irritates her childless landlords, who make racially aggressive statements toward the young parents and their children: “‘I can’t wait to see them pack their brats and leave our

house,' the landlady would say loud and clear" (Emecheta 72). Yet Adah pays the rent and follows the building rules.

The landlords' eviction of the family—legally permitted without explanation—is not the only racial discrimination that Adah faces. As Francis notes, "accommodation is very short in London, especially for black people with children" (Emecheta 38). Part of the psychological pain Adah feels in London is caused by her seeing posters with the statement, "Sorry, no coloureds" (Emecheta 70). To a mother who runs around frantically in search of a safe space for her children, this common, legally permitted racial attack is psychically damaging: she has "now been conditioned to expect inferior things" (Emecheta 70) and finds herself "looking at the sub-standard" goods in stores. Having completed her high school certificate as well as librarian exams in Lagos, Adah "did know…that being regarded as inferior had a psychological effect on her" and "was not going to accept it from anyone" (Emecheta 71). In spite of the racist landlords in Britain, Adah struggles to maintain her "elite" ambitions. She seeks not only a flat large enough to house her children, but refuses to settle for "second-class" housing—that is, housing that is rundown, poorly heated, and lacking a bath. When Adah finally finds a suitable two-room location and appears at the landlord's door with her husband to view it, the couple are suddenly rejected by a nervous landlady: "she was very sorry, the rooms had just gone" (Emecheta 77). The couple is forced to move into a house which "leaked," where "the stairs were cold" and "creaked," where "the walls were damp and…the windows were cracked" (Emecheta 85). Though Adah rarely experiences open aggression from individuals outside the home, she suffers from the combination of class, gender, and race discrimination within the only place she might

find sanctuary: her flat. The rented rooms in *Second-Class Citizen* compress and exacerbate all of the social conflicts in her new country.

Adah gradually wears down from the stress of working full-time and caring for two children virtually alone. She searches, in vain, for a good babysitter. When Adah relies on the English, working-class Trudy, she finds her children alone, playing in the mud, and drinking dirty water in the white woman's backyard. Vicky, Adah's son, becomes seriously ill. Francis appears to take advantage of Adah's absence in the hospital to start an affair with the babysitter. Adah screams at him: "If anything happens to my son, I am going to kill you and that prostitute. You sleep with her, do you not? You buy her pants with the money I work for" (Emecheta 64). Adah's clashes with the babysitter, outside the latter's home, intensify. Depicted in terms of racial and class warfare, they express her increasing psychological distress: "Adah spat, foaming in the mouth, just like the people of her tribe would have done… 'I am going to kill you, and with a smile on my face. I saw Vicky with my own eyes in the rubbish dump…I pay you the money I earn, let my husband sleep with you, and then you want to kill my son!'" (Emecheta 66). Adah breaks into tears after this speech, feeling as though she were a lone warrior in an endless field of hostility; she notices the "white women" who witness this conflict stand there "looking at her" in silence and she assumes "they had probably never seen an angry Ibo woman" (Emecheta 66). At home, she thinks of suicide, realizing that in Britain "[a]ttempted suicide is not regarded as a sin" (Emecheta 66). As her postcolonial nuclear family in London slowly rows forward, Adah is tossed by the waves of racism, class conflict, and misogyny within it.

Francis demeans and assaults Adah more often and with greater intensity. When Adah longs to write, having born five children and been the only breadwinner of the family for years, she is

judged by Francis to be one of the "brainless females…who could think of nothing except how to breast-feed her baby" (Emecheta 167). When she resists sex, he shouts, "Why, you wicked witch? Is it too much for a man to want his wife?" (Emecheta 85), then forces himself on her: "she whimpered in pain" (Emecheta 85). Villain that he is in the novel, Francis expresses his own, distinct psychological stressors. As Adah succeeds in her "first-class job," earning the respect of her boss, "the conventional roles within the family are reversed" (Jackson 105). Significantly, the "chances for employment are better and more constant" for black women than for black men (Jackson 105). Failing time and again at his exams, refused any professional work other than a petty clerkship or work as a postman, Francis is full of "hatred" toward those who, like the white landlady, close the door on him and his family: "his feeling of blackness," that is, the sense of inferiority which makes him believe some places "were not for blacks" (Emecheta 58). Adah argues that Francis "could no longer cope with the over-demanding society he found himself in" (Emecheta 101). His only solace appears to be womanizing with white women: "a white woman represents more than a desire to achieve stability. It represents a psychic need for 'absolution'" (Jackson 113). In spite of frequent absolution, Francis' restlessness and aimlessness develop in proportion to Adah's strength and power. He becomes "the individual whose own private life was repressed to such an extent that he could compensate himself only by acting as despot in his own household" (Simmel 333). Francis becomes the enforcer of British racism and misogyny at home toward his successful wife.

Adah exhibits severe depression and psychosis during her third pregnancy. Emecheta portrays these emotional states in slow motion, non-clinically, and makes clear the social instigation of each of her heroine's psychic reactions. They take place prior to the birth of Bubu, Adah's

third child, and continue as she recovers in the hospital. She wakes up "[s]ad, and feeling very sorry for herself" (Emecheta 94). In severe physical pain, Adah realizes that she is "completely isolated from other people" (Emecheta 95). Her worry is constant: she worries whether the family will "have enough money to tide them over" (Emecheta 94), she is "worrying about what they were going to live on" (Emecheta 95) and "the gas affair worried her" (Emecheta 97). She believes her "boss was always looking at her" (Emecheta 94). These worries are compounded by the persistent and mounting abuse of Francis: "what would Francis say? She wondered with fear" (Emecheta 96). She wants to "scream as if the devil was burning her insides" for then she "would get the sympathy she wanted" (Emecheta 96). Because Adah's baby is "lying in a funny way" (Emecheta 98), she seeks help from her husband; he dismisses her needs. She engages in an internal debate about religion and the freedom of women while listening to the ideal of the "virtuous woman Francis was yapping about" (Emecheta 98), women who must, like "slaves, obey your master" (Emecheta 100). Her mind retreats from reality. She sees "Francis's sex" (Emecheta 100) as similar to Big Ben and the seemingly timeless power of colonialism. She "started to puzzle out all over again whether the ribs opposite her belonged to a man or woman" (Emecheta 102). These lengthy, tortured analyses of the social causes of her physical and psychic pain show that Adah's mental distress is neither a "personality defect" nor a sickness, but a rational psychic response to severe social oppression. Francis searches for the bible to further lecture Adah. Medical help eventually arrives at their home, but "the room started going round and round in all the colours of the rainbow. Francis has now turned into Lucifer" (Emecheta 106).

Her hallucinations and signs of depression continue in the maternal hospital. She envisions once again Francis's penis as a "sword of fire" (Emecheta 107). She "screamed high and loud," and sees the medical staff as emissaries of death: "The men and women were like angels of light" (Emecheta 108). After Bubu is born, Adah remains depressed: the physicians "expose her to the view of those student doctors…Adah burst into tears" (Emecheta 115). The doctors, Adah believes, think she is suffering ordinary "after-baby blues" (Emecheta 115). Consequently, they do not respond to Adah's distress, though it is evident: "Adah did not stop" crying and "hated being what she was" (Emecheta 115). Amid her tears, she wonders, "Why…she could never be loved as an individual" (Emecheta 115). Adah's anguish is deepened by the indifference of the medical staff and professionals. She "found it very difficult to control her tears…They were waiting for her to stop" (Emecheta 115-116). Given that none of the staff are black, their indifference to her suffering takes on a racial significance; earlier, her midwife had aggressively asked her, as she bled profusely, "Can't you read English?" (Emecheta 105). Adah becomes acutely self-conscious, feeling that others in the hospital judge her for her loneliness. For she and Francis "had no friends" (Emecheta 116) and her husband visits her very briefly. Adah believes, in her distress, that the women around her silently engage in racial attacks: "*Look at the nigger woman with no flowers, no cards, no visitors*" (Emecheta 119). Francis brings her nothing, and she does not have, as the other patients do, a nightdress of her own; Adah is clad in a prison-like, striped, hospital uniform. She demands that Francis drop off her Ibo *lappa*, inscribed with "Nigerian Independence, 1960" (Emecheta 124), so that others in the hospital will know that "she came from Nigeria, and that Nigeria was independent" (Emecheta 124). Yet she is haunted by her sense that those around her are harbouring the worst racial prejudices: "She was sure that they were all

laughing at her and saying, 'poor nigger!'" (Emecheta 125). Adah's choice of the *lappa*, and her assertion toward her husband, are Adah's first steps of combatting the racialized and gendered limitations of her colonizing environment.

While her trauma persists in the hospital, Adah's extended rest in the maternity ward allows her to develop tools to fight her social isolation. She studies the marital relationships and social lives of three women whom she admires. The first woman has been married for seventeen years and finally bears her first child: "the woman who had had to wait for seventeen years" was "walking round the ward proudly with her child" (Emecheta 115). Instead of having lost her husband, she is supported by him, who "looked old enough to be her father"; "she never stopped laughing" (Emecheta 112). Adah looks at this woman "with new eyes" (Emecheta 112), as she discovers that a woman may be of value for herself and not for her fertility. The second, whom Adah calls the "sleek woman," is a young secretary who married her widowed boss. The "sleek woman" was once as friendless as Adah, for she was "an adopted daughter, she never knew who her real mother was or her father" (Emecheta 114). Though the "sleek woman" brings neither money nor connections to her husband, Adah saw "the sleek girl being kissed and loved" (Emecheta 115). The third woman who influences Adah is a Greek seamstress who works for Marks and Spencer, and who owns a fleet of housecoats, "all with beautiful frills and edgings" (Emecheta 116). The independence, industry, and splendour of this seamstress impress Adah enough to make her focus on her own nightdress and, perhaps, her freedom within a capitalist system. These women express a joy and agency that Adah admires: "For the first few days, when Adah was deciding whether it was worth struggling to hold onto this life, these women kept showing her many things" (Emecheta 111). She begins to long for love as an individual

rather than as a member of a collective: she wants to "be loved, really loved, and where she would be free to love" (Emecheta 114). This hope for a new life will fuel her slow recovery through the rest of the novel, during which she tries to acquire the Pill, seeks out supportive friendships, begins to write and, eventually, leaves her husband. Though Adah is not given any means—by hospitals, clinics, nurses, doctors, landlords, neighbours or the legal system—to combat her emotional, physical, and sexual abuse, her attempts to reach out to individuals for support, both colleagues and neighbours, provide her with social power.

Adah's "focus on the private self" (Sougou 54) as a means of repairing her mental distress is a lengthy political battle, stretching from the time when, at eight, she realizes she is unimportant to anyone in the universe. Emecheta, who inhabits Adah's own trajectory from poor Nigerian schoolgirl to London immigrant to British-Nigerian writer, guides the reader through every element of Adah's mental distress. Within each of these elements, Emecheta depicts the complex and warring social factors that trigger Adah's distress: misogyny; poverty; familial hierarchies; isolation; lack of familial support; institutional sexism; lack of birth control; sexual and emotional abuse; institutional racism; racial prejudice and attacks. The breakdown that Adah suffers is the result of cumulative psychic stressors. This accumulation can only be understood in detail, arguably, through a novel like *Second-Class Citizens*.

Chapter 3

"Some of Us Nearly Went Mad in England": Language, Racism, and Mental Distress in Caryl Phillips's *Foreigners*

Caryl Phillips's *Foreigners* (2007), a novel with three distinct but interlocked sections, was published six years after the September 11 attacks on the United States, during the height of Islamophobic and neo-liberal discourse. While "[t]he street disturbances that swept Britain in the late 1970s" (Ledent 3) and early 1980s had quieted, the racial discrimination that contributes to mental distress in British citizens from "racial and ethnic groups" (Chakraborty 119) in the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s was kept alive by lingering eugenic thinking. Attewell writes extensively about the fear of racial and social Armageddon during this period; she traces this fear back to British imperialist thinking while reading "apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic fictions as animated by anxieties about…imperial divestment and immigration" (Attewell 171). Apocalyptic discourse is fuelled, as Attewell delineates, by racial and social anxiety. It recurs in different forms, from postwar debates about immigration to Enoch Powell's "Rivers of Blood" speech in 1968 to more recent terrors of HIV and Ebola. Attewell argues that this repeated racial and social insecurity is laced with empire-sustaining eugenic theories and fortified, paradoxically, by a rejection of British imperial history: "one of the ways in which post-war debates about immigration, race, and national identity engaged with Britain's history as an empire was to insist on the irrelevance of this history, denying that decisions about who should and should not be permitted to live in Britain should be informed by any history of shared (imposed) belonging" (Attewell 174). The fear of a loss of British identity among those who engaged in apocalyptic discourse leads to, for

instance, an erasure of Black British history. This "postmillenial decade" was "a decade during which it had otherwise become fashionable to proclaim a "post-racial," "post-black," and "post-feminist" era (Pirker 118), which suppressed public discourse on the effects of racial discrimination on the individual.

Foreigners challenges this fashionable discourse by exposing the cyclical nature of eugenic ideas, particularly in language, and their contribution to the mental distress of three black individuals. Phillips infuses the historical stories in *Foreigners* with the present; the identity of the Black Briton as a "foreigner" in Britain is depicted as a historical tradition dating back to the Roman era. Phillips writes against this grain. At a conference at the Université de Liège in 2015, Phillips summed up his stance in a phrase: "post-racial my ass" (Université de Liège). Phillips grew up in an environment, in northern Britain, full of psychological and physical racial violence: "The first time one is called a 'nigger'…one's identity is traduced and a great violence is done to one's self" (Guardian). He argues that he is still not "visible" (NYPL) as an individual in the country of his infancy. In spite of the increase in non-white Britons and their comparative integration into all levels of British society, eugenic thinking continues, even in highly educated individuals who do not understand that their ideas perpetuate historical errors. In 2006, British novelist Martin Amis "expressed alarm at the fertility gap separating 'us' from 'Islamists'" (Attewell 169), a paranoia and racism astonishingly similar to that of Enoch Powell's forty years earlier. Furthermore, "[s]uch sentiments as Amis's remain unexceptional" (Attewell 169). Around the same period, scientific research appeared in Britain proving that racial discrimination, including racist language, has a direct impact on mental distress: "A relatively new approach in determining the health effects of racial discrimination is by determining people's direct

experiences of discrimination and their relation to health status. The most common outcomes of these studies have been mental health (e.g., depression, psychological distress) and hypertension or blood pressure" (Chakroborty 127).

In *Foreigners*, racist language and mental distress thread through the "triptych of fictionalized biographies" (Birat 59), defined by others as "a set of freestanding profiles, only lightly fictionalized" (Birat 59). Philips suggests that he chose to write about the three protagonists because they are somewhat interdependent: "they are all foreign in approximately the same way; they are black, male, and nominally British. Their race, gender, and nationality play a great part in the way in which their various identities are constructed and offered up to them by British society" (Schatteman 184). By lining up three British stories from three historical periods, Phillips points out the recursiveness of racial constructs, particularly in language. Whether Phillips's text is biography or fiction or reportage, its close historical study of Black British life reveals the use of language, from period after period, as a psychological weapon. As Fanon states, through racist language, the "white man…unmercifully imprisoned me" (Fanon 85). Phillips does not "underestimate the cyclical nature of these things"; the "racial and social determinism" (Schatteman 187) of the lives of Barber, Turpin, and Oluwale, who suffer from related racial attacks, hints at the refinement of British racism over time. Remarking that "'the past and present and future [of the black man and the white man] are inextricably interwoven'" (Ledent 14), Phillips makes the language of the past continually present to normalize the experience of mental distress in racist environments: his "emphasis on individual experience allows the reader to access more fully the psychological dimension of historical processes" (Boutros 110).

In an interview, Phillips discusses the registers of language in *Foreigners*: "The language

of the Barber section fascinated me. The high civility of the English language when used to describe acts of cowardice and betrayal" (Schatteman 189); he further explains that the "imaginative reconstruction" in the Francis Barber story "corresponds to the mystery of a black man's private experience of England in the eighteenth century." This reconstruction was "necessitated by the fact that Barber did not write anything himself, and that what we know about Barber has been learned mostly from James Boswell" (Birat 62). About Randolph Turpin, Phillips says: "Turpin's story is told from the outside." This exteriorization is journalistic: "In the Turpin section I was trying to fashion something akin to sports reportage" (Schatteman 189), and reportage of the time, rendered with sufficient irony to reveal its racism. With respect to "Northern Lights," the story about the life of Nigerian immigrant David Oluwale, Phillips notes, "I was led by this legal quest for accuracy" (Schatteman 185). Thus Phillips "dispensed with the division between fiction and non-fiction" (Schatteman 188), and used both imagination and facts to counter the biased and limited historical legal, journalistic, and scholarly documentation of the "marred" lives of three "black male individuals" (Pirker 117). The young Phillips "first wanted to study psychology and neurophysiology" (Ledent 2). The stories in *Foreigners* are investigative, and allow the reader to discover the connection of racist language and mental distress as a historical phenomenon with recurrences over time.

Fanon argues that "[t]he feeling of inferiority of the colonized is the correlative to the European's feeling of superiority" (Fanon 69). He describes how this relation is structured by the colonizer's language: "the racist…creates his inferior" (Fanon 69). The colonized's mental distress is created through frequent racist attacks—phrases such as "Dirty nigger!" and "Look, a Negro!" (Fanon 82). Francis Barber is subjected to eighteenth-century racist slurs frequently. As

we read slur after slur, we learn of Barber's early promise, stagnation, and slow deterioration. Though Francis Barber arrives as a child in England and is treated as a son by the eminent writer and originator of the first English dictionary, Dr. Samuel Johnson, his "jungle status" (Fanon 9) is reinforced by those close to Johnson, by the "wit" who narrates his story, by the innkeeper who relates false information about his life to the narrator, and even by Johnson himself. Barber is not like the black children whom Fanon refers to in *Black Skins, White Masks*; those children are raised in a "normal black family" in colonial Antilles and later become "abnormal on the slightest contact with the white world" (Fanon 111). This is because there is, in the case of these black children, a "disproportion between the life of the family" and the life of the white world colonizing the Antilles (Fanon 110). Barber is the product of slavery, which creates an inherently abnormal family system. Born in a Jamaican plantation, he suffers "the loss of all firm roots" (Boutros 11), along with the "traumatic experience" (Boutros 9) and "radical displacement" of slavery (Boutros 9). At eight, Barber is wrenched from his environment altogether and raised in solitude by the "white world" of 1750s London. Fanon might ask of Barber what he asks of the child in the Antilles: "Did the little black child see his father beaten or lynched by a white man? Has there been a real traumatism?" (Fanon 112). Barber as a child is traumatized at least four times: first, by being born into slavery; second, by being forcibly removed from his environment in Jamaica and transported to England; third, by being packed off to a boarding school managed by a priest, presumably to be christianized; fourth, by being passed on by this first English master to a second one, Johnson. Stripped of everything physical, Barber is soon psychologically snared by the English language. Named Quashey at birth, the protagonist is renamed Francis by his slave-owner—naming itself being a violent, traumatizing act.

One would imagine that Barber's so-called abnormality would be incurable and extreme; instead, Barber is extraordinarily normal, as an active, curious, and friendly boy, for his time and place. His choices in life are also "normal," and his extreme psychological distress by the end of his life is surprising. An exuberant teenager, Barber runs away to the sea and works for the navy, is educated on his return, takes care of Johnson as a young adult, marries a white Englishwoman, has children, buys a cottage in Lichfield, runs a schoolhouse, and enjoys fishing and farming. On the surface, Barber's life is a modest success. Barber is enthusiastically English, perhaps because "there is always identification with the victor" (Fanon 113). What is strikingly "abnormal" in Barber's life, for the contemporary reader, is the language used by those around him to dismiss his choices, highlight his failures, and denigrate his origin: his land of origin, the child is told by Johnson, is "a place of great wealth and dreadful wickedness" (Phillips 24); he is judged to be "an idle black boy" (Phillips 26) by Miss Williams. The folly of those around the young Barber is subtly exposed by Phillips. Johnson is a "vigorous protector of his negro" (Phillips 22) and assumes the adventurous, intelligent boy, whom he had apprenticed to an apothecary, must have been "used wrongly in some vile manner" to "run off to sea" (Phillips 27); his enterprising decision to serve in the navy is judged by the narrator to be no better than "absconding" (Phillips 35), and his "popularity with a variety of young females" seems to the narrator to warrant reproof to this "sable" man for "*any* aspect of his behaviour" (Phillips 35). Like his slave-owner who removes Barber's original name, the narrator uses this language to obscure Barber's identity, positive qualities, and achievements; whatever he does is criticized, even by those friendly to him.

The challenges that Barber overcomes as a former slave are ignored by those around him. The narrator of "Doctor Johnson's Watch," a "gentleman" (Phillips 14) in "London

society" (Phillips 5) who has "retired from my commercial business in the City" (Phillips 14), is able to use the English language to distort the portrayal of the "renowned" (Phillips 7) Francis Barber. We never learn about the traumatic experiences of his childhood, nor of his biological family, nor of his native culture; it is not that young Francis cannot remember any of these things, but that those near him believe that "his mind was now almost totally cleansed…of his birthplace" (Phillips 24). In the home of writer and proto-abolitionist Samuel Johnson, Barber is raised and educated, then inherits the bulk of Johnson's estate in 1784. While Johnson's love and respect for Barber are well known, the protagonist is described by the narrator and others in ways that are full of repulsion, fear, and envy; Barber is "rejected by a civilization which he has none the less assimilated" (Fanon 69). What is striking about the narrator's language is his insistence that Barber, who lives most of his life in England, is an "unmoored man" (Phillips 11), an "African" (Phillips 15), and a "faithful negro servant" (Phillips 6), rather than the English "gentleman" Johnson wished him to be. The narrator frequently connects the terms "negro" and "servant" and, though he gets to know Barber well, often refers to him as "the negro" (Phillips 7) instead of "Francis" or "Barber." He thereby distances himself and all Englishmen from Barber; he reduces Barber into a "parasite of the world" (Fanon 73). It was only in 1772 that the Chief Justice of England extended the "protection of habeas corpus" to all black people in England (Nussbaum 135). The words and phrases that the narrator uses to erase Barber's individuality and freedom are problematic to the modern reader for their insistency and familiarity, so that they begin to feel like a shared mental tic.

The first reference the narrator makes about Barber, as the former steps into the eighth coach of Johnson's funeral procession, is "faithful negro servant, Francis Barber" (Phillips 6).

This phrase is followed by "the polished sable exterior of the renowned Francis Barber" (Phillips 7). "Negro," a word that literally means "black," was introduced by the Portuguese and Spaniards in the sixteenth century, when they began enslaving Africans. By adding the word "negro" to "servant" and "attendant" (Phillips 6), the narrator infuses slavery with servitude, as though Barber were—as in fact he is—doubly oppressed. Although Johnson treats Barber as a son, he would have been referred to and regarded by those around him as a servant, not an equal. This unnecessary double-description continues in various ways, but always attached to the word "negro": "the negro Francis," as though there were another black person in the story (Phillips 7); "negro husband," as though Mrs. Barber might have two (Phillips 48). The phrase, "negro servant," repeated several times, implies a distinction between Barber and the other servants (Phillips 48). Even after having conversations with the protagonist, the narrator distances himself from him by calling him "the negro": "this negro had most likely been destroyed by the unnatural good fortune of the many years of keeping company with those of a superior rank" (Phillips 54). The narrator never considers that Barber may have been destroyed by the daily reduction, from childhood, to "the risk of finding only the non-existent" (Fanon 105). The word "negro" has a way of dismissing the other words that accompany it, and its repetition begins to ring in the reader's ear like a slur, especially given that the word "negro" carries with it a historical implication of enslavement.

Thus the narrator in using the term "negro servant" effectively re-enslaves the free servant; he makes it clear that Barber is not equal to a white servant. The narrator also chooses to amplify the misfortunes of "the negro" with phrases such as "forlorn negro" (Phillips 15), "sad negro" (Phillips 11), "pathetic negro" (Phillips 56), even when Barber's sorrow has to do with

losing a loved one, and has no connection to slavery per se. Through this repetition the narrator implies that there is something natural about sadness and pathos in a black man, whereas Barber's "good fortunes" of being associated with and inheriting money from Johnson are, by contrast, seen as "unnatural" (Phillips 54) by the narrator. Daria Tunca has addressed the issue of racialized "evaluative adjectives," such as "the sad negro" and "pathetic negro": "the narrator presupposes Barber's responsibility in his own demise" (Tunca 173). These notions are proto-eugenic, linking the body of the black man to "sadness" and "pathos," rather than to the social structures he has to live in. Tunca further notes: "the Jamaican's helplessness is ideologically encoded into the narrative account through the attributive position of 'pathetic' and 'pitiful'" (Tunca 173). These adjectives also suggest "a dependency complex" (Fanon 73), though Barber struggles against any such dependency. The thoughtless reader may "unwittingly lean toward an infantilization of the servant akin to the narrator's own" (Tunca 174). Two hundred years later, Fanon wrote, "A white man addressing a Negro behaves exactly like an adult with a child" (Fanon 19). Ultimately, Barber expresses his internalization of the infantilization he has suffered from all his life, and it—together with other racial attacks—destroys his youthful "exuberance of personality" (Phillips 7).

The gentleman-narrator also reduces Barber to the role of foreigner, even well after having met the very English adult. He refers to Barber's original name once more, at the end of the story, when he imagines that the boy Quashey is reaching out to him for help; Barber lying in a workhouse infirmary is reduced again, in the narrator's mind, to a helpless child. The young Quashey, however, would have still possessed the "Negro culture" and its "pride" (Fanon 93); it is in Britain that the child is stripped of his identity. The name "Barber" may have been invented

by the hellenophile Johnson to signify the Greek term for barbarians, used for all foreigners. Like Johnson, the narrator regards him as a foreigner. He refers to him, with luxurious pity, as "a poor transplanted African," though he knows that Barber was born in Jamaica (Phillips 15). He conjures up the young Quashey as "the young heathen" (Phillips 24) whose soul is saved by Johnson, without considering that Quashey may have contributed to the life of the childless widower. By continually denying Barber's Englishness, however pityingly he does so, the narrator adds to the linguistic blows he inflicts upon the protagonist.

The narrator follows such blows with a constant, derogatory focus on Barber's skin colour. He seems to admire Barber's "polished sable exterior," but twice he denigrates Barber as "sooty" (Phillips 7, 11)—as if the narrator had seen Barber emerge from the interior of a chimney. While his "exterior" is regal, his interior is perceived by the narrator as dirty. Barber's skin is deemed "ebony," another positive description, but the narrator links it with fragility and Barber's sickness. He argues that "all ebony personages should" leave England, "for I was now convinced that English air is clearly not suitable for negro lungs" (Phillips 54). The word "sooty" appears three times as a synonym of racialization (Phillips 7, 11, 27), whereas "sable" appears twice (Phillips 7, 35) and "ebony" (Phillips 54) once. The narrator also uses "sootiest" to describe the "frock coats" of clergymen (Phillips 5), suggesting gravity, perhaps sadness. Nussbaum notes that there were in the eighteenth century "earlier racial confusions" but that this "early racial thinking evolved into the organizing grammar of an imperial order" (Nussbaum 136). Hearing these common racist slurs about his skin colour, as the only black man in his environment, probably contributed to Barber's ultimate psychic isolation and depression: mental illnesses occur "following race-related verbal and physical assaults, racial stigmatisation and the cumu-

lative effect of racism as a trauma" (Chakraborty 133).

Barber receives some support from his "father and his anchor," Dr. Johnson, who does not use these derogatory expressions; nor do he and the Lichfield innkeeper use the term "negro" with respect to Barber. Johnson calls him "my boy" (Phillips 37) and the innkeeper calls him Francis Barber (Phillips 14). Johnson also never uses the term "servant" to describe Francis. But Johnson does not encourage independence in Barber, and he seems to believe Barber naturally requires management. Unaware of the fortitude it requires to survive as a former slave in a slave nation, "he worried about Francis' frail nature and his susceptibility" (Phillips 27). The narrator's mentality was more than likely the norm at the time. Both Miss Williams and Sir John Hawkins exhibit strong racial prejudice toward Barber. No one considers that Barber is being cast out of a system constructed to abuse him. The narrator thinks Barber's ultimate failure lies in his race. By repeatedly using terms like "his beloved negro" (Phillips 21), "his negro" (Phillips 22), and "the doctor's negro attendant" (Phillips 7), the narrator does more than attempt to situate Barber within the existing class system. He is also on a linguistic hunt to capture Barber and view him as someone's natural property. Barber knows that he has been given a good education and is "provided [for] handsomely" in Dr. Johnson's will (Phillips 49); he seems to be puzzled by his ultimate failure, tragically blaming it on himself. Though Barber seeks repeatedly to be free—by choosing a life at sea, by having a family of his own, by starting a small school—he despairs about his own failure: "Look liberty in the face. What see you?" (Phillips 53). He does not realize that the whole society he lives in, including people who love him, contribute to his re-enslavement: "Even coming to Lichfield was a fulfilment of my master's wishes…I would have been better served committing to a life at sea" (Phillips 53). Though Johnson loves Barber, he

never frees both of them from his power as a master. Instead, Barber forever lives as a "black in relation to the white man" (Fanon 83), always having to "meet the white man's eyes" (Fanon 83), an impoverished life as a servant, instead of one "presented with real liberty" (Phillips 53).

The persistent racist language experienced by Barber is embedded in the "civilization" in which he has been forcibly placed, and which he ultimately internalizes. When the narrator meets Francis Barber for the first time in the funeral coach, the narrator states that "these few encounters with Francis Barber stimulated precious little in the way of conversation between us, save the normal pleasantries between superior and inferior that one might expect in civilized society" (Phillips 7). In spite of being "renowned," Barber is only integrated into "civilized society" as an inferior. It is unclear whether the narrator judges Barber to be his inferior because Barber was a slave or because he was a servant. If Barber was a servant in Johnson's house, it is uncertain how and when he was transmuted in England from being a slave to being a servant, for we are never given the impression that Johnson paid him for his labour. But it is questionable whether Barber was ever a servant at all in Johnson's house. The narrator does not indicate Barber's duties, apart from mentioning that Barber "ushered" (Phillips 7) friends in and out of the house, which any family member might do. The young boy never wears "livery": Johnson, like his friend Dr. Bathurst, "had no desire to impress his peers by dressing the negro as a satin-clad page or forcing the child to wear livery of any sort" (Phillips 24). When the sixteen-year-old Barber runs away to join the navy, Johnson worries over him in a way very unlike that of a "master": "For sixteen long months, Johnson suffered daily anxiety about the moral and spiritual well-being of Francis" (Phillips 28). Johnson sends him to school again when Barber returns, perhaps as a compensation of sorts for having pulled Barber out of the Royal Navy. Barber learns Greek

and Latin, as a young gentleman might. Having spent most of his time with Johnson and his literary friends, Francis utters sentences that are those of a gentleman rather than those of a servant: "I am sorry that we should meet again in such unfortunate circumstances" (Phillips 9). In spite of noting many signs of Barber's personal superiority, the narrator insists on his essential servitude.

After Johnson dies, Barber is subjected to the full force of social violence. He begins to suffer from mental distress. Sir John Hawkins, as "the chief executor of the doctor's will" (Phillips 8), is the most discouraging among Johnson's friends of Johnson's wish to leave "money to a negro" (Phillips 49). Phillips suggests that Hawkins robs Barber of his "annuity." Barber does not seem to suspect that he has been robbed of his inheritance, nor do those who are friendly toward him. Even his wife believes that her husband "borrowed" so much money from Hawkins in two years that the whole "sum of money" (Phillips 49), supposedly "handsome," was "spent" (Phillips 49); she views Barber as weak, just as Johnson does. In London, the racism of the area is extreme: "It was hard to find anyone who would give us work or even welcome us" (Phillips 49). After years of mistreatment and poverty, Barber and his family move to Lichfield, where Barber uses his remaining funds to purchase a cottage and run a schoolhouse to provide for his family. By then, Francis's wife tells the narrator, "Frank's sadness drove him to drink more and so we had to start to let go of the doctor's pieces" (Phillips 49). Though "he used to take pleasure in a spot of fishing or cultivating a few potatoes" (Phillips 49), he can no longer indulge in these joys. Barber is not a gambler or a womanizer or a thief or a liar. He seems to be a devoted husband and father. The only fault he seems to have is a dependency on alcohol, and that worsens after years of rejection and poverty. Nonetheless, the innkeeper, who knows and likes Barber, believes that he has caused his own misfortunes: "Apparently Mr. Barber squan-

dered the not inconsiderable sum of money that his master left to him" (Phillips 20). Without proof, the innkeeper corroborates Hawkins's insistence that Barber had used up his inheritance, as does Mrs. Barber; to be condemned in this way contributes to Barber's becoming "as sad and as broken as a man can be" for "the fellow did let himself go" (Phillips 20).

The language that Barber uses to describe his own life to the narrator is structured by the history of the slave trade, as are his mental and physical health; his "mind is weak" (Phillips 52) and he "looked nervously all about himself" (Phillips 53). He ruminates about whether he would have been "better served"—as a slave?—in "my native Jamaica" (Phillips 53). Barber does not permit himself to call Johnson his father. His references to their relationship express a loyalty to his "master": "I wonder…if perhaps I have disappointed my master" (Phillips 53). He expresses a guilt similar to what Fanon has identified a part of the colonized mind: "I am guilty. I do not know of what, but I know that I am no good" (Fanon 106). The world Barber has grown up in has always considered him guilty. Thus he asks the narrator, as though he believed himself an eternal servant, "perhaps I have disappointed my master. Have you come to this place to accuse me of this crime?" (Phillips 53). Barber struggles, inadequately, to identify what in him is "no good": "I lack dignity" (Phillips 53). This seems to mean, "I am still a slave." Perhaps Barber grasps what Fanon argues about the word "Negro": "The Negro is a slave who has been allowed to assume the attitude of a master" (Fanon 171). Without any other language than that drenched in white supremacy, Barber can only believe what Hawkins, the narrator, the innkeeper, his wife, and even Johnson suggest about his nature; Johnson "feared that my nature was too weak and that I might misuse all the things that he was about to bestow upon me" (Phillips 53). These deathbed statements express the profound internalization of a lifetime's experience of racial prej-

udice and hatred.

The final, most devastating racial attacks that the narrator inflicts on Barber are aimed at his child and, thereby, the future of Black Britons. Though the narrator might have handed over Johnson's watch as a symbolic promise of the future, the language he uses toward Barber's daughter predicts further isolation, racism, and violence. The child is "strangely coloured" (Phillips 17); has a "fuzzy head" (Phillips 17); is a "creature" (Phillips 18); "the grimy-faced child looked ruefully at its mother" (Phillips 34). Though Francis's skin colour is referred to by turns as "sable," "black," "ebony," or "sooty"—reflecting the "racial confusion" of the time—the child's skin colour is described by the narrator as "dirty" or "grimy" in a way that expresses physical repulsion. The narrator, who pretends to despise slavery, cannot express such disgust toward the "renowned" Barber, the associate of Samuel Johnson, but he can do so to Barber's child. And though he refers to the young Quashey as a "piccaninny" (Phillips 22), the word "mongrel" is yet more dehumanizing. The child is viewed as an animal with words such as "cub" and "mongrel" and "it" (Phillips 17). Tunca quotes Fanon's examination of the ""zoological terms" that colonizers so often used to "dehumanize the native"" (Tunca 169). Barber's daughter is almost entirely silent before the narrator. When she refuses to answer a question that he poses, he immediately assumes she is unintelligent: "this question stretched her comprehension" (Phillips 17). When Barber's daughter begins to speak with her mother in the kitchen, the narrator describes their exchange as unintelligible: "I had no idea of what they were saying for it was as though they were speaking their own secret language" (Phillips 34). They are like beings from another world, demonized by the narrator. They "jabber" rather than talk. It is unclear why the narrator cannot understand them, as Francis is unlikely to have maintained his first language

in his household; the narrator does not wish to understand what they say. This refusal is like an erasure of the relationship between Betsy and Barber. The voicelessness and disconsolateness of the child only represent more intensely those of her father.

In "Made in Wales," Phillips echoes much of the language used toward Barber's child in his portrayal of Randolph Turpin's childhood, nearly three hundred years later. Turpin was born of a Guianese man and an English woman in Wales in 1928. Like Francis Barber, Randolph's father—Lionel Turpin—was in the British military, and served in the First World War. Lionel is referred to by Britons as "Sam," short for the pejorative "Sambo" (Phillips 82). His son is called "dirty" or "khaki-coloured" (Phillips 83). He is known as "the Licker" (Phillips 84) by neighbours, who cross the street when they spot the family. When the psychologically troubled Turpin becomes a successful boxer, taunts by the newspapers and the sportswriter-narrator are modified to milder, if insistently racialized adjectives similar to those faced by Francis Barber: "the dusky English lamb" (Phillips 65); "the coloured lad" (Phillips 65); "the promising coloured fighter (Phillips 65). The narrator notes that though he is "born and bred in Britain," Turpin is "treated" as a foreigner (Phillips 72). He is considered "the ebony imposter" (Phillips 71) and "a gladiator" (Phillips 67), like a slave of empire. As he gains glory, however, Randolph's Englishness is recognized: he is simply "THEIR CHAMPION" (Phillips 80). His Englishness is less emphasized in public discourse, however, than is his body and its colour. The narrator reduces Turpin to a valuable object, in language reminiscent of the slave auction block: "heavily muscled coloured lad" (Phillips 69); "as strong as an ox" (Phillips 68); "[h]is torso was like an oak tree" (Phillips 69); "sleek brown body gleaming" (Phillips 99). When Turpin begins to lose fights, the power of institutional racism turns on him. In America, he is charged for physically abusing a woman. In

court a lawyer hurls violent racist attacks at Barber. “This man is bestially primitive” (Phillips 118), he states, then adds that “Turpin was ‘definitely mentally ill, psychopathologically’” (Phillips 118). Turpin’s previous suicide attempt having been criminalized with the help of the police, a court, and a doctor, the lawyer’s statement reinforces the institutional criminalization of the mentally ill. While the concept of race was still confusing to citizens and institutions in mid-eighteenth-century Britain, racism had been formalized in courts, medicine, and journalism by the mid-twentieth century. As Turpin’s legal and financial problems increase—and these, significantly, occur in proportion to his boxing losses—journalists begin to erase his achievements. The *London Evening Standard* calls Turpin “just another fighter” (Phillips 127); the *New York Times* publishes a story entitled “Turpin: A Story of Riches to Rags” (Phillips 130). The police track him down in both New York and Britain for domestic assaults that he had been forgiven as a rising star. He is “hounded by the Inland Revenue for taxes” (Phillips 131). By the end of his life, the combination of institutional racism, including institutionalized racist language, and mental distress prove deadly to the once idolized Turpin.

The story of a British Nigerian stowaway, David Oluwale, and his life in Leeds in the 1950s and 1960s exposes the prevalence of race hate and hate speech among British citizens. In the ship that brings him to Britain, David is found by a sailor who is “disgusted that he had discovered a nigger on his ship” (Phillips 157). Though it is 1949, David is “a veteran of the Atlantic passage” (Phillips 158) rather than a twentieth-century postcolonial immigrant. He is, literally, handcuffed on arrival. He is routinely and viciously attacked at night by the police. Later he is institutionalized in a mental hospital. Phillips uses the experiences of this protagonist to pinpoint the depth of institutional racism in the British police system, a racism described as the “big

black overcoat" that Oluwale wears while being beaten (Phillips 152). According to a friendly witness, "his face was all mashed up" and he is "in pain" (Phillips 152). Having been criminalized upon arrival—as an immigrant of eighteen—Oluwale is made vulnerable to repetitive abuse by the police, doctors, courts, and neighbours in his new country. The first narrator remarks, with a hint about community knowledge of David's institutionalization in a mental hospital, that "he struck me as highly intelligent. Not crazy at all" (Phillips 155). Phillips suggests that the word "crazy" becomes a weapon for the police to marginalize people of colour in 1950s Britain. Oluwale is able at first to withstand the onslaught of racist abuse that black men, both workers and students, experience; he meets West Indians, dances, lives near the University, and dreams of being an engineer. He endures the "hostility of young louts" (Phillips 165) who spew racist epithets at him at night: "Hey you, nigger boy. Did you come out of your mum's arse?" (Phillips 171). He looks for pubs where he can socialize without restrictions: "No Coloureds, No Dogs, No Gypsies" (Phillips 166). After some time, Oluwale begins to lose his "very bouncy" personality (Phillips 168). The doctor at the foundry where Oluwale works notes his loss of joy and advises him to go to a film hall with another racist crack: "Cheer up, sunshine! Everyone's the same colour in there" (Phillips 171). The stress of encountering constant racial attacks from every element of a city probably contributes to the angry language that Oluwale spouts at the police: "He'd never fight…but verbally he could be very abusive" (Phillips 172). But "he wasn't crazy, he just didn't understand the system" (Phillips 172). We never hear the words used by the police to instigate his anger, but we can guess by what Oluwale says when he becomes "very wound up" (Phillips 172): "I'm from a British colony and I'm British…So why do they call me 'nigger'?" (Phillips 172).

The three stories in *Foreigner*s, linked together, reconstruct British racism, from the early colonial period till the civil rights era, and from the perspective of the mentally distressed individual of colour. This early twenty-first-century historicization of racism was subversive in that it challenged prevalent public discourse during a supposedly "post-racial" period. This historicization of racism in Britain continues to make this challenge for, as *Foreigners* powerfully argues, racism expands and refines itself with time, and houses itself in institutions, language, and the legal system. The racist language experienced by Barber, Turpin, and Oluwale is surprisingly similar, but it is inflected with increasingly diverse methods of expression over time: Barber faces racist language on an individual level; Turpin faces it not only from the white community in his home town but also from journalists, a doctor, a lawyer, courts, and policemen; Oluwale faces it from an openly aggressive public, a violent police system determined to criminalize and marginalize him, and a psychiatric system that collaborated with law enforcement to sedate black men "into submission" (Phillips 175). Alongside literary work that challenged the "post-racial," eugenically-laced discourse in the early 2000s, there appeared new scientific research on the connection between mental distress, illness, and racism in the United Kingdom. This research relies, in part, on personal reporting of racism and mental illnesses. While the knowledge to be found in a work like *Foreigners* is not scientific, it offers a unique support to psychological and psychiatric work on the connection between racism and mental distress experienced by Caribbean and African Diasporic people living in Britain. It does this as follows: by, first, exploring the long-term accumulation of social stressors that cause mental distress; second, by allowing the reader to inhabit the multifaceted social context in which the mental distress occurs; third, by utilizing autobiographical and historical material to make its case.

Conclusion

All three texts studied in this thesis address the connection between racism and mental distress among Caribbean and African Diasporic immigrant protagonists, with a distinctness and limitation representative of the psychoanalytic or psychiatric work of their time. In *Black Skins, White Masks*, Fanon explores the connection between racism and mental distress: "I propose nothing short of the liberation of the black man from himself" (Fanon 2). He focusses on the liberation of the psyche of the "black man," not the black individual irrespective of gender. Fanon's work, extraordinary in its application of social psychology and existentialism to the colonized mind, was the first break from imperialist and racist European psychiatry. It offers broad, collective analyses of the Afro-Caribbean psyche as a challenge to that history of eugenics in British psychiatry. In *The Lonely Londoners*, Galahad's response to a racist encounter with a white mother and child is the objective version of Fanon's subjectivity in the opening paragraph of "The Fact of Blackness." Both of these challenges—one psychoanalytic, the other literary—have the limitations of all things new. Fanon has to rely on the past, and in *Black Skins, White Masks* he relies on, among other European psychiatrists, Freud, who saw "similarities between "the mental lives of savages and [European] neurotics" (Fernando 34-35). Yet Fanon is "well aware that Freud and Adler and even the cosmic Jung did not think of the Negro in all their investigations" (Fanon 117). The limitation of Fanon's work is that it focusses on Black pathology rather than on social failure, and this due to its reliance on European psychiatry.

European psychiatrists, as Suman Fernando has argued, used their work to validate both the slave trade and colonialism. Pro-slavery psychiatrists in the early nineteenth century deemed the "primitiveness" of non-Westerners to be pathological: one claimed to discover "the deleteri-

ous effect of freedom on 'sluggish and uncultivated brains'" of African Americans (Fernando 34). There were very few bias-free psychological analyses or psychological novels about African diasporic and Caribbean lives in urban settings during the early half of the twentieth century. W. E. B. Dubois' *The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study* is one exception, but this is primarily a work of social science that offers broad insights into the emotional lives of black Philadelphians. As noted in Chapter 1, there were studies in the 1930s America and Germany that exposed the links between psychosis, urbanization, and migration, but without any focus on African American people. Until the 1990s, "the psychiatric tool devised in Britain" was structured by a "paternalistic and judgmental view of non-Western idioms" (Fernando 35). According to Suman Fernando, because the idea of "mental illness developed in European culture," that culture decides "who was civilized and who was not" (Fernando 32).

The psychiatrist R. D. Laing and other social psychiatrists of the 1960s and 1970s made more popular the connection between mental distress and political and social conditions; "social and community" psychologists and psychiatrists were particularly "influenced by the social scientists" (Fernando 46) and recognized—if they did not always study—the existence of racial discrimination. Yet eugenic theories about the bodies of people of colour persisted as epidemiology in British psychiatry. Audrey Lewis, a eugenic theorist and "dominant figure of British psychiatry" (Roelke 21), suggested that there was "in Europe about that time…the view that non-Europeans were mentally degenerate because they lacked Western culture" (Fernando 33). In 1973, J. P. Leff, a psychiatrist at the British Institute of Psychiatry, made an "observation" that "people from industrially 'developed countries' show a superior level of emotional differentiation from those from (industrially) 'developing' countries and black Americans" (Fernando 35). As one

scholar argues, “The early decades of the institutionalization of psychiatric genetics exemplify the inseparability of the history of eugenics and medical genetics, at least in the first half of the twentieth century” (Roelke 19). Fernando demonstrates that, unlike the immigrants in the United States, the “immigrants to Britain from parts of the world that used to form the British Empire are viewed with the sort of racism that thrived in that empire” (Fernando 32). British immigrants formed “one large group of ‘Blacks’” whether they were “Asians, Afro-Caribbeans, Cypriots” (Fernando 32), and presumably they were viewed with the same eugenic lens by many mid-century psychiatrists. Instead of analyzing the effect of social violence and discrimination faced by Afro-Caribbeans in Britain, one scholar in 1979 described “Afro-Caribbeans in British society,” as having “suffered ‘cultural stripping,’ leaving their family life weak and unstable,” while another scholar “vilified” the Asian family in Britain “for being too stable and too strong a culture” (Fernando 46). In fact, both family systems are criticized because they offer support to Britons of colour, who are repeatedly attacked by a racist society.

Despite the popularization of social psychiatry, social psychology, and postcolonial literature, eugenic theories continued in the social sciences and psychiatry in the 1980s and 1990s. According to some, such as sociologist Stuart Hall, psychiatry in the 80s engaged in “collaboration” with historical myths about the “degeneracy of Blacks” and its cause of psychosis; during this era there was a “connivance of a racist psychiatry” using “psychological, social and psychiatric literature” (Fernando 31). Because “objective, physical knowledge of how the brain works are extremely shallow,” it is possible for “political forces [to] determine the nature of what constitutes illness” (Fernando 35, 36). The collaboration of “racist psychiatry” with historical myths not only influenced the Islamophobic thinking of the late twentieth and early twenty-first cen-

turies Britain as explored by Attewell, but also the criminalization of minorities through drug-use legislation: “the idea that Blacks should not smoke cannabis, but do so, enters into the construction of the disease of ‘cannabis psychosis’—a British diagnosis that is given almost exclusively to Blacks (McGovern and Cope, 1987)” (Fernando 37-38). Even as they transform from one period to another, these eugenic ideas develop new, covert methods of reinforcing themselves in British psychiatry and its institutions.

Scientific studies of the effects of racism among Britons are very recent, and are a particularly powerful weapon in the fight against racist ideologies: “A relatively new approach in deterring the health effects of racial discrimination is by determining people’s direct experiences of discrimination and their relations to health status” and the “most common outcomes of these studies have been mental health (e.g. depression, psychological distress” (Chakraborty 127). In a book published in 2013, Chakraborty explains that “[t]he main problem with this approach is a lack of standardization in measuring self-reported experiences in terms of: length, intensity, and frequency of exposure; domain of exposure (e.g., global or specific situations); and the targets of discrimination (e.g., individual family members or the family unit as a whole); reactions to racial discrimination” (Chakraborty 127). Self-reporting is somewhat unreliable. People respond differently to the same experience of racism, based on the role and background of the interviewer, as well as the condition of the interviewee: “There are four factors which may mean people experiencing the same discriminatory ‘exposure’ would report them differently” (Chakraborty 127). The first of these four factors is the internalized oppression of the interviewee, the second is the social desirability of the interviewer, third is the exaggeration of discrimination (system-blame), and fourth is the possible distortions due to cognitive effects: “To elucidate more clearly the ef-

fects of racism as a stressor, there needs to be a greater understanding of the way in which racism combines with other sources and types of stress, as well as the identification of intervening variables that may moderate or mediate the effects of stress on health (coping factors, personality types etc)" (Chakraborty 128).

Literature may be a unique supplement to the new scientific field connecting racism to mental distress in Britain, for "linking racism to mental health has multiple, inter-related connections" (Chakraborty 131). The elements that are currently researched to link mental health and racism in Britain include the following: ethnicity; cultural group; social stressors; poor health; social class; minority status. The texts examined in this thesis have applied some of these methods of research to individuals, with a focus on minority status, ethnicity, and culture, occurrence and duration of discrimination, social class, as well as many specific social stressors (e.g. housing, location, job opportunities, family structure).

Five years after the publication of Fanon's *Black Skins, White Masks*, Sam Selvon represents the Caribbean and African Diasporic experience—on postwar London streets, rented rooms, stations, parks, squares, and the river—as emblems of their physical and psychic marginalization. Their social suffering in London is built into their material and quotidian life, yet mental distress of the characters is described obliquely and simply. Galahad remarks that his lack of work makes him "feel bad" (Selvon 121). Moses records Galahad's condition with "sorrow" (Selvon 121). Moses tells us that the city is "powerfully lonely when you on your own" (Selvon 29). Selvon adds little interiority in his references to his characters' psychic pain: it is sad, bad, sorrowful, and lonely. Galahad's psyche is represented in the same large, uncomplicated strokes: he has a "feeling of loneliness and fright" (Selvon 23). Mental distress is covered

through actions. Cap and Galahad are reduced to killing and eating wild urban birds. Moses concludes the immigrants' saga by likening their collective loneliness to "standing in the same spot" (Selvon 138) within an eternal river. Apart from Moses, the heroes are somewhat mute. They are silenced by, though at war with, the slave past and the colonial present. Moses is their epic poet and their prophet. Standing before the Thames, he liberates them from invisibility through his vision of their "fight to live" (Selvon 138); under his spell, their tragedy is rendered through symbols and images reminiscent of mythical nations. The choice of heroic—"grand-charge"—rather than individualistic expressions of psychic pain may have been in response to the limited understanding of psychiatry at the time of the publication.

Elements of social psychology and psychiatry emerge in Buchi Emecheta's *The Second-Class Citizen.* The heroine experiences paranoia, delusions, and clinical depression during the period leading up to her third pregnancy; her mental breakdown is described in detail, each thought linked to the isolation and abuse that she suffers from her husband, her religious and colonized backgrounds, her family, and the racist environment she finds herself in. Though Emecheta does not refer directly to mental distress or mental illness, these are easily detected from Adah's thoughts of suicide, her threat to kill Trudy, her fears of always being watched and humiliated, her uncontrollable tears, her internalization of racism, and her retreat from reality. In all these instances, Emecheta describes the personal logic of Adah's affect, which allows the reader to identify its social cause.

Emecheta's text, together with other post-colonial novels, offers a rejection of still-prevalent ideas identifying race as the root of mental illness and mental distress. The groups uniformly classified as "Blacks" at the time are differentiated in *Second-Class Citizen* by nationality, cul-

ture, class, and gender. Among those interacting with and examined by Adah are a Czech female boss, a Japanese nurse, an Indian female doctor, an Indian male doctor, a Canadian male colleague, several working-class Englishwomen, a middle-class Nigerian, and working-class Nigerians. While grappling with the change in her marital relations in Britain, Adah has to adjust to numerous class, culture, and race conflicts. Adah is no mere emblem of the burgeoning feminist movement; she is an individual whose psychic pain clearly stems from a myriad of social attacks, both in Nigeria and in Britain, on her individuality. Many of these attacks and their influence on Adah's psyche, prior to her breakdown, are described in detail: her need for a home forces her into an early marriage with a man who later rapes and beats her; her desire for an education is ignored by her family; her ceaseless rage for educational and financial success within an impoverished and colonized context; her inability to control biological reproduction by either acquiring birth control or freeing herself from her husband's violence; the lack of sufficient maternal support; a racist housing system. The reader follows the development of these silken threads to their centre via Adah's close, personal comment about them. For example, Adah calls her marriage the "saddest day" of her "whole life" (Emecheta 24), which rings true in light of her nervous psychological strategies about finding financial support and a home in a society where "living alone would be asking for trouble" (Emecheta 23). These intimate thoughts are common elements in a novel of personal development. But after these threads extend and become more complex, Adah's psyche becomes the focus of the novel in a way that expresses the popularization of social psychiatry. Her thoughts are intense, staccato, but not unreasonable: "she felt…she was letting those she loved down" (Emecheta 95); "she felt it was her duty to work, not her husband's" (Emecheta 95); "she was so completely isolated from other people" (Emecheta 95);

"she did not make any protest" (Emecheta 95). These first comments at the beginning of her psychosis are attempts to identify the social causes of her distress, but suggest Adah's helplessness in doing so. Her thoughts become irrational and her mind disintegrates: "Supposing she…[s]tarted to scream as if the devil was burning her insides" (Emecheta 96); "she was looking at him with thick hatred" (Emecheta 97); the "room started to go round and round in all the colours of the rainbow" (Emecheta 106). The combination of insight into a cumulative history and the condition of her mental breakdown provide a very powerful understanding of the social stressors related to mental distress in African Diasporic immigrants.

Foreigners offers a historical study of the elements of mental distress faced by black British men. Each protagonist is provided not only a personal history, but a historic background. Together these stories allow the reader to understand the cumulative causes of mental distress. The nature of contemporary medical treatment appears in two of the stories, coupled with depictions of the protagonists' mental and physical condition. Though the work is considered to be a novel, Phillips uses as much factual documentation as possible in all three stories to render portrayals of the mental distress of Black Britons all the more powerful (Ledent 188-189).

Foreigners addresses the persistence of racist ideology over time with a sophisticated, twenty-first-century literary challenge. The cyclical nature of racism is clear in the work, but less interesting than the increasing virulence of British racism. As Fernando has demonstrated, racist ideology only became more refined in the sciences, psychiatry, politics, and the legal system in the 1970s and 1980s, after the American civil rights movement (Fernando 30): "the ways in which racism manifests itself assumes a specific form 'which arises from the present—not the past—conditions and organisation of society' (Hall, 1978)" (Fernando 30). Phillips suggests that

Francis Barber is robbed of much of his inheritance and dies in a workhouse infirmary, but he is not jailed, beaten, or deprived of his life. The language used to denigrate Barber by the narrator does not express the scientific and historic race-hatred that is inflicted on Randolph Turpin by neighbours, journalists, lawyers, and doctors; Barber maintains a loving family and works as a school teacher. Those who victimize him are members of the upper classes, which suggests that racist ideology had not yet been developed and distributed to the entire population; the Black Briton was both, as the narrator indicates, fearful and romantic to the white British mind. The child Turpin, on the other hand, is verbally attacked and marginalized by his working-class neighbours. The son of a British serviceman, Randolph Turpin becomes an athletic hero, in a field only opened to Black Britains in 1947, and he achieves wealth and international fame. Though Randolph loses his championship belts as well as his wealth, is condemned by the boxing press, and is victimized by the police and the legal system in both Britain and America, he later maintains a happy family, a small business, and the respect of British boxing fans. Turpin's lifelong mental illness is criminalized in his youth (under the Suicide Act of the time), a legal contradiction that permits policemen and courts to later charge and condemn him more easily. David Oluwale, as a teenager, is criminalized upon his illegal arrival in Britain, harassed by the police, placed in a mental hospital after a confrontation with them and, when he emerges, no longer works. David's high aims end before they begin, and yet this is not enough for the invisible population that does not want him in Leeds; he is murdered by the police for his continuing resistance. His destruction is achieved by an institutionalized racism refined over centuries, with psychiatry its most recent tool. The historic information that Phillips inserts in the Turpin story about the presence of Black men and Black communities in Britain, during the Roman and Eliz-

abethan eras, cements the notion of ritual racial cleansing; the sociological quality of Phillips's "novel" is this implication of the eternal European expulsion of the "foreigner."

The value of reading literary work that reveals the link between racism and mental health may be understood in relation to current medical and educational deficiencies. First, as psychiatrist Jaswant Guzder has argued, the psychiatric "consultation process can be experienced as a re-traumatization or revival of structural violence" (Guzder 144) if the psychiatrist has no understanding of the patient's family system and social context. Psychiatric "assumptions based on Euro-American cultural norms" can lead to "destructive views of minority and migrant families, minimizing their cohesiveness, resilience and strengths" (Guzder 146). Even if the psychiatrist treating the patient is an "ethnic match" to the patient, "the patient may be uncomfortable with too much proximity, so that ethnic match becomes an obstacle to the alliance" (Guzder 144). The aim is to "build an alliance" through "culturally acceptable options for intervention" within a clinically "neutral" context (Guzder 144). The ideal psychiatrist or psychologist achieves a "neutrality" that allows the psychiatrist to work "with this positioning to build an alliance and open up culturally acceptable options for intervention" (Guzder 144). An understanding of Windrush writers might help a psychiatrist and a patient of West Indian origin to attain alliance and acceptance. Patients of counsellors or psychologists also experience "the fear that they will be treated in a racist manner" by their counsellor (Guzder 190). Yet, as psychologist Shirlette Wint states, "there are not enough trained mental health professionals from marginalized cultural communities" and "stereotypes continue to dominate in health and other major institutions" (Guzder 190). Racist encounters with mental health professionals can be catastrophic, for they render "the process of coping with mental illness or other psychic distress more difficult" (Guzder 190). For

"[i]t is particularly difficult to raise issues of racism and inequality when they are embedded in institutional practices" (Guzder 190).

If mental health professionals, high school teachers, and students were given access to (and encouraged to use) libraries of post-colonial literature that addresses mental distress, not only would students of immigrant background be better prepared to experience and resolve mental health problems in their lives, mental health professionals would be better prepared to build an alliance with them. Furthermore, a wide distribution of such literature would help de-stigmatize the still suppressed experience of mental distress. Lastly, the development of libraries of literature that describes the connection between racism and mental health might increase the knowledge of their "multiple, inter-related connections"—only now being researched by social scientists—to the general public.

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