THE ROLE OF TRANSCULTURAL MEMORY IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY IN CARYL PHILLIPS'S FICTION

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submitted by **DENİZ KIRPIKLI** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy in English Literature, the Graduate School of Social Sciences of Middle East Technical University** by,

Prof. Dr. Yaşar KONDAKÇI
Dean
Graduate School of Social Sciences _____

Prof. Dr. Çiğdem SAĞIN ŞİMŞEK
Head of Department
Department of Foreign Language Education _____

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elif ÖZTABAK AVCI
Supervisor
Department of Foreign Language Education _____

Examining Committee Members:

Prof. Dr. Nursel İÇÖZ (Head of the Examining Committee)
Middle East Technical University
Department of Foreign Language Education _____

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elif ÖZTABAK AVCI (Supervisor)
Middle East Technical University
Department of Foreign Language Education _____

Prof. Dr. Aytül ÖZÜM
Hacettepe University
Department of English Language and Literature _____

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nil KORKUT NAYKI
Middle East Technical University
Department of Foreign Language Education _____

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Seda PEKŞEN
Ankara University
Department of English Language and Literature _____

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name, Last Name: Deniz KIRPIKLI

Signature:

ABSTRACT

THE ROLE OF TRANSCULTURAL MEMORY IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY IN CARYL PHILLIPS'S FICTION

KIRPIKLI, Deniz
Ph.D., The Department of English Literature
Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elif ÖZTABAK AVCI

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Caryl Phillips's engagement with the past, particularly the history of the black diaspora in Britain, is a significant aspect of his literary production. Focusing closely on *Crossing the River* (1993), *A Distant Shore* (2003), and *In the Falling Snow* (2009), this study argues that Phillips's works of fiction illustrate the transcultural memory of Britain and the black Atlantic that moves across the seemingly impermeable borders to unsettle the homogeneous construction of categories such as nation, culture, and identity. The theoretical framework of this study considers Paul Gilroy's concept of the black Atlantic as a form of mobility that creates the transcultural memory of Britain. The shared anti-nationalist perspective of transcultural memory and the black Atlantic concept provides a foundation to explore how mobility across national and cultural borders throughout ages have shaped cultural dynamics and racial politics in Britain. In these novels, which chart the evolution of the black diaspora, transcultural memory runs contrary to British national amnesia and brings to the fore multiple representations of diaspora experience. Thus, this study investigates how memory contributes to the construction of identity and to the ways individuals deal with social change and conflict through remembrance and forgetting. The formal elements of the

novels mirror their thematic engagement with mobility; therefore, this study also examines the ways Phillips uses a mnemonic strategy that is shaped by a fragmented narrative structure and a temporal zone shifting back and forth to demonstrate the effects of the past on the present.

Keywords: Caryl Phillips, transcultural memory, the black Atlantic, black diaspora, nation

ÖZ

CARYL PHILLIPS'IN ROMANLARINDA TRANSKÜLTÜREL BELLEK VE KİMLİK İNŞASI

KIRPIKLI, Deniz
Doktora, İngiliz Edebiyatı Bölümü
Tez Yöneticisi: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elif ÖZTABAK AVCI

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Caryl Phillips'in geçmişe, özellikle Britanya'daki siyahi diasporanın tarihine olan ilgisi, edebi üretiminin önemli yönlerinden biridir. Bu çalışmada Phillips'in *Crossing the River* (1993), *A Distant Shore* (2003) ve *In the Falling Snow* (2009) romanlarında Britanya ve siyahi Atlantik'in transkültürel belleğinin coğrafi ve kültürel sınırları aşarak ulus, kültür, kimlik gibi kavramların tek unsurlu yapılaşmasını sorunsallaştırdığı savunulmaktadır. Bu çalışmanın teorik çerçevesi kapsamında Paul Gilroy'un siyah Atlantik kavramı Britanya'nın transkültürel belleğini oluşturan bir hareketlilik şekli olarak ele alınmaktadır. Transkültürel bellek ve siyah Atlantik konseptlerinin anti-milliyetçi bakış açısı toplulukların ulusal ve kültürel sınırların ötesinde yüzyıllar süren hareketliliğinin Britanya'da kültürel dinamikleri ve ırk politikalarını nasıl şekillendirdiğini incelemek için bir temel oluşturur. Siyahi diasporanın evriminin bir çizelgesini oluşturan bu romanlarda, transkültürel bellek Britanya'nın ulusal amnezisine karşı koyarak diaspora deneyiminin çoklu temsillerini ön plana çıkarır. Bu nedenle, bu çalışma belleğin kimlik inşasında ve bireylerin hatırlama ve unutma yoluyla sosyal değişim ve çatışmayla başa çıkmasındaki rolünü araştırmaktadır. İncelenecek romanların biçimsel unsurları sınırlar arasında

hareketliliği ele alan tematik unsurları yansıtır niteliktedir, bu nedenle, bu çalışma ayrıca Phillips'in geçmişin günümüz üzerindeki etkilerini göstermek için kullandığı, parçalı ve zamanda ileri geri hareket eden anlatım biçimini incelemektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Caryl Phillips, transkültürel bellek, siyah Atlantik, siyahi diaspora, ulus

To my family

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Caryl Phillips, a novelist, playwright, and essayist, is one of the most prolific contemporary writers. Although Phillips himself resists all labels and national identifications, he is known as a second-generation black British writer with multiple cultural allegiances. He was born on St. Kitts, in the Eastern Caribbean, in 1958 and his parents migrated to England when he was only a few months old. It was "too late to be coloured, but too soon to be British" as he describes his position in Britain (*A New* 4). He grew up in Leeds and his family was "'the only black family' on a tough, all-white working-class estate" ("Color" 3). During his childhood his "only refuge was reading" (3). He initially pursued a degree in psychology but then he studied English Literature at Oxford University. After leaving Britain in the late 1980s, he started to live in New York but still keeps a home in England and St. Kitts (3). He has taught at numerous universities and is currently a Professor of English at Yale University.

In line with his multiple cultural allegiances, Phillips's work has engaged with the Atlantic triangle of Africa, Europe, and America. In his essay collection, *A New World Order* (2001), Phillips writes: "I know my Atlantic 'home' to be triangular in shape with Britain at one apex, the west coast of Africa at another, and the new world of North America (including the Caribbean) forming the third point of the triangle" (2). In this sense, the black Atlantic topography, conceptualized by Paul Gilroy as a "webbed network" (*The Black Atlantic* 29) that is shaped by a process of movement contesting the idea of rootedness, is a sphere that has great relevance for Phillips's literary production. The journey motif across this cartography has become a literary theme in Phillips's work since it allows the exploration of movement as an essential process for the formation of memories and diaspora. Hence, this study aims to explore how his novels *Crossing the River* (1993), *A Distant Shore* (2003), and *In the Falling Snow* (2009) illustrate the transcultural memory of Britain and the black Atlantic to

challenge British national amnesia that downplays Britain's role in the history of slavery. Phillips portrays the cultural process of negotiating transcultural connections giving voice to marginalized characters and restoring their stories to create an alternative to official historical records, thereby potentially reshaping collective memory. This study contextualizes Phillips's approach to memory against the background of the black Atlantic. Accordingly, in the theoretical framework of this study, the black Atlantic is considered a form of mobility that creates the transcultural memory of Britain. The concept of transcultural memory and the black Atlantic meet on the common ground that migratory trajectories, or routes, play an essential role in the construction of identity. The boundaries of cultural categories have become blurred and identity is no longer regarded as a stable entity. In line with this, it is movement that enables the reinvention of identity and expands its definition, as reflected in Phillips's novels. Once the characters he creates cross the water, they enter a diasporic world, which has been built for ages. As he contends, "the British character, like that of most nations, has been forged in the crucible of hybridity of cultural fusion. … British life at all levels…[has] been shaped and to some extent defined by the fortuitously heterogeneous nature that is the national condition" ("Extravagant" 288). Thus, Phillips deals with Britain's entangled history and transcultural connections with the black Atlantic by paying particular attention to this transformative effect. His literary production serves to retrieve the silenced past of the black diaspora and interconnected histories of Britain and Africa. To this end, complexities of the black Atlantic experience and subsequent feelings of dislocation, displacement, and fragmentedness are illustrated in his works as a challenge to essentialist[1] approaches to identity in British nationalist discourse.

Brought up in a hostile area where he had to learn "how to fight and how to run" (3), Phillips experienced the "cultural confusions of being black and British" which is rooted in the questioning of belonging in his works (*European* 2). Although

[1] Essentialism refers to the categorical thinking in social relations that "searches for the intrinsic "nature" of things as they are, in and of themselves" (Fuchs 12). Discourses oriented towards the production of the national identity draw from essentialist thinking to legitimize the subjugation of minority groups for the benefit of the dominant group.

he felt an emotional attachment to the Caribbean, he did not identify himself as Caribbean. His parents did not talk much about their homeland to allow their children to integrate into the culture of the host country. But he felt he did not fully belong in England either. He remembers how all the children looked at him at school when the teacher "read them a tale about Little Black Sambo" as he was the only black child at school ("A Life" 107). These childhood experiences caused him to have a "sense of almost permanent displacement" ("Living" 49). In 1978, he travelled to the United States and in the 1980s he frequently visited St. Kitts, which made him aware of the richness of his multicultural identity. His sense of self was continually negotiated through his explorations of his ancestral home and past; therefore, questions of identity and home have become the key issues in his works. He comes to consider "the Africa of his ancestry, the Caribbean of his birth, the Britain of his upbringing, and the United States where he now resides as one harmonious entity" (*A New* 6). Therefore, he mentions his desire for his ashes to be scattered into the Atlantic Ocean at a point equally distant from the coast of Britain, Africa, and North America, the locations which give him the feeling "of, and not of" (4). In his interview with Charles Wilkin, Phillips states:

> For me it's always been particularly important to remember my roots … It's been very important to me that I remind people in Britain and in the United States that they can't co-opt me as some sort of exotic addition to their literary tradition … I always try and remind them that there's a place from which they can't uproot me and that is the Caribbean. They're never going to be able to uncouple me from the Caribbean because I am part of that long tradition of Caribbean people who've moved beyond, but who continue to feel rooted here. ("An Interview" 120)

In relation to Phillips's remarks on his Caribbean roots, Bénédicte Ledent argues that "while Phillips has been wary of idealizing the Caribbean, he has adopted its inherent racial heterogeneity and rich cultural makeup as a paradigm that might be useful for multi-ethnic nations in crisis all over the world" ("Caryl" 75). As such, in Phillips's fiction, the focus of attention expands beyond the social issues of contemporary British society to a broader historical context, from the enduring legacy of colonialism to the roots of the current immigration problems. As he remarks, "travel enabled [him] to understand that constantly reinterpreting, and if necessary, reinventing oneself is an

admirable legacy of living in our modern, culturally and ethnically kinetic world" ("Necessary" 131). He has further travelled the world, staying in India, Sweden, Poland, Canada, Singapore, New Zealand, taking notes and writing about his experiences. The trips broadened his horizon by liberating him from an insular perspective. He came to realize that "the narrative did not begin in Leeds or Brixton" ("Rites" 126). Thus, both his migratory experience and travelling has given him a "fluid sense of self" that is nourished by his "dual and multiple affiliations" ("Necessary" 131).

Phillips always had a sense of exile from British culture during his childhood and "felt like a transplanted tree that had failed to take root in foreign soil" (*European* 9). Thus, his works are considered "both as products and as philosophies of migration" (Walkowitz 535). One of the most rewarding times of his life was his summer vacation when he first journeyed to the United States and started reading the works of Ralph Ellison, James Baldwin and Richard Wright, all of which deeply influenced him (*European* 5). Yet, his moving to the United States was not a rejection of Britain. Kasia Boddy claims that Phillips's "narrative started in the Caribbean and is currently unfolding in the United States, but Britain was the place of his *Bildung*" (3). It is what he has experienced in Britain that urges him to write about race, migration, and class. As he explains in his interview with Maya Jaggi, his "anxieties aren't American or New York anxieties, they're British" ("Rites" 86). His interest in history and belonging stems from the lack of representation in the British past that he has deplored since his childhood. The "narrative," he states, which was given in Britain "barely included any reference to the colonies, apart from in a kind of ugly and strange way" ("A Home" 368). He admits that he gets inspired from black American culture, particularly Richard Wright's *Native Son* (1940) and Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* (1952) in his writings. James Baldwin has also been a great influence, particularly, on his interest in matters of race and a pluralist notion of home. Thus, he further notes: "[m]y relationship to black American literature – or, more importantly, black American society – was very important to me … because I didn't have any coherent sense of a black British tradition. We didn't have any role models ("Of This" 155). He feels the need to amend the lack of a black British tradition in literature. Thus, he explores

beyond Britain to expose its transnational connections and influences, which nourish his writings.

Much of Phillips's work, fiction and nonfiction, focuses on the abiding effects of the political unrest in Britain in his youth and the politicians' attempt to "invoke a racially constructed sense of Britain" ("The Pioneers" 277)[2]. He describes how he felt "the uncomfortable anxieties of belonging and not belonging" in the 1970s ("*Following*" 234). Thus, what he experienced in the United States was not akin to one he had in Leeds, which has inspired his work. However, Phillips acknowledges that this "migratory condition and the subsequent sense of displacement can be a gift to a creative mind" ("*The Gift*" 131). And he has found this gift and the "contradictory tension … of attraction and rejection by England" in the writings of the post-war migrant writers such as George Lamming and Samuel Selvon, whose vision, as Caribbean immigrants in Britain, has most influenced him ("Following" 234). Such literary influences with transcultural connections further enriched Phillips's writing.

Phillips goes beyond racial solidarity to explore various forms of social and cultural distinctions. Gail Low locates Phillips within a group of authors such as Fred D'Aguiar and Paul Gilroy, who "write of a transatlantic black diasporic community that moves beyond national boundaries. Partly because of the history of migration, and partly as a result of a long history of racism" ("The Memory" 117). Likewise, Dave Gunning thinks that Phillips's works need to be "positioned within the intersections of a global network of communications" (31). In relation to his avoidance of black essentialism, Phillips notes that "[for] a moment my generation flirted with the idea of making being 'black' the basis of our identity … but mercifully this unsatisfactory notion never really took hold" ("*The Pioneers*" 276). He rather celebrates diversity and interconnectedness as evident in his works because he believes that "to submit to the view that race or ethnicity encapsulates the greater part of one's identity … is to surrender to a certain despair" ("American" 32). Therefore, he illustrates in his works an aspect of identity that is associated with transformation rather than stability.

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[2] In his infamous "Rivers of Blood" speech on 20 April 1968, British Member of Parliament Enoch Powell attempted to convince British people that British national identity was threatened by the presence of the immigrants. Similarly, in 1975, when Margaret Thatcher was the Leader of the Conservative Party, she invoked fear of invasion considering the immigrants as alien forces.

It is the essentialist nationalist discourse of Britishness that categorizes British nation as an exclusionary unit. In such categorization, social and historical factors are cast aside; race and ethnicity are characteristically conceived as integrated with culture. Through the integration of race with culture, racial differences become the marker of national and cultural otherness. Nation, thus, is constructed as a fully homogeneous and stable unity that excludes blackness. This understanding of Britishness is challenged by cultural plurality and heterogeneity in Phillips's works as he believes that "[i]t is crucial for white Britons to understand that the African was the flexed muscle of the British Empire, an Empire the British never gave up" (*European* 127). To this end, by use of various divergent narrative voices, his novels illustrate the connection between different temporal and spatial experiences. Through his explorations of the imperial past, he exposes the effects of racist ideology, cultural assimilation, and migration on identity. He asserts in various ways in his novels that the legacy of slavery is not just a part of black cultural identity; it is a part of British national identity, as well. As he remarks, "race and ethnicity are the bricks and mortar with which the British have traditionally built a wall around the perimeter of their island nation and created fixity" ("The Pioneers" 272). Thus, juxtaposing various narratives of the past, Phillips produces in his works a counter discourse to essentialism of British national identity. He stands in a position seeking to destabilize this fixity produced by the official history, which has been taken for granted. In this sense, his engagement with the past in his works can be regarded as his attempt to fill in what the received history leaves out.

Phillips's literary production involves eleven novels[3], five volumes of non-fiction[4], four stage plays[5], two screenplays[6], a radio play[7], and two anthologies[8], all mark him as a very prolific writer. His sustained success has been awarded by numerous literary prizes, including the Malcolm X Prize for Literature (1985), Martin Luther King Memorial Prize (1987), a Guggenheim Fellowship (1992), James Tait Black Memorial Prize (1994), Fellowship of the Royal Society of Literature (2000), Commonwealth Writers Prize (2004), PEN/Open Book Award (2006), Anthony N. Sabga Caribbean Award (2013), and Hurston/Wright Legacy Award (2016).

Phillips contributes to English literature through his investigation of the established understanding of the past. By focusing on its aspects that are left out of traditional accounts of history or colonial archives, he alerts his readers to the realities they might not be aware of otherwise. As a writer, he deeply believes in the transforming power of literature. He points out that "the lesson that great fiction teaches us as we sink into character and plot and suspend our disbelief: for a moment, 'they' are 'us'" ("Color" 16). In order to demand empathy and responsibility from the reader, he complicates the issues of belonging and identity by further illustrating unusual encounters, possibilities, and characters from various backgrounds in his fiction. His works cover a wide-ranging variety of contexts, engaging closely with race and nation, migration, the slave trade, the Holocaust, the consequences of colonisation, and experiences of loss, disillusionment, rootlessness, estrangement, displacement, and the legacy of slavery, which shows itself in the effects of the past on the present. His earliest novels *The Final Passage* (1985) and *A State of Independence* (1986)

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[3] *The Final Passage* (1985), *A State of Independence* (1986), *Higher Ground* (1989), *Cambridge* (1991), *Crossing the River* (1993), *The Nature of Blood* (1997), *A Distant Shore* (2003), *Dancing in the Dark* (2005), *In the Falling Snow* (2009), *The Lost Child* (2015), *A View of the Empire at Sunset* (2018)

[4] *The European Tribe* (1987), *The Atlantic Sound* (2000), *A New World Order* (2001), *Foreigners* (2007), *Color Me English: Selected Essays* (2011)

[5] *Strange Fruit* (1981), *Where There is Darkness* (1982), *The Shelter* (1984), *Rough Crossings* (2007)

[6] *Playing Away* (1987), *The Mystic Masseur* (2001) (adapted from the novel by V. S. Naipaul.)

[7] *The Wasted Years* (1985)

[8] *Extravagant Strangers*: *A Literature of Belonging* (1997), *The Right Set: An Anthology of Writing on Tennis* (1999)

emphasize the complexities of immigration and can be viewed as Phillips's attempt to come to terms with his own experience. He expresses a preoccupation with autobiographical interests as the former novel introduces a couple immigrating from the Caribbean to England, like Phillips's parents did, and in the latter the protagonist returns from England to the Caribbean after several years, as Phillips did for a while as a young adult. While a continual engagement with the sense of displacement and fragmented family structure prevails in all of his literary production, his works in the following years take a more observable transcultural direction in that he deals with historical connections in a more complicated manner and introduces characters with more complex identifications. He takes his interest in history to a deeper level to deal with different time spans and places. *Higher Ground* (1989), *Cambridge* (1991), and *Crossing the River* (1993) draw attention to the transatlantic slave trade presenting characters from various historical and cultural settings interweaving disparate voices. While *Cambridge* juxtaposes the accounts of an emancipated slave and a plantation owner, *Crossing the River* unites the seemingly disparate stories of the black Atlantic in a frame narrative. Significantly, in *Higher Ground* and his later work *The Nature of Blood* (1997) Phillips examines the parallels between racism and anti-Semitism as two forms of recurring discrimination in history.[9] *A Distant Shore* (2003), which introduces a refugee figure as a protagonist, is his first novel that is set in contemporary England. Philips continues to focus on contemporary British society from another perspective in *In the Falling Snow* (2009), which explores the generational differences in the black diaspora. In his following novel, *The Lost Child* (2015) Phillips's exploration of racism and colonialism extends to his reimagination of Emily Brontë's fictional character Heathcliff from *Wuthering Heights* (1847). He offers an intertextual dialogue with Brontë's novel by connecting the shared sense of loss in the stories of Heathcliff's, Brontë's, and that of a broken family in the post-war era. He investigates issues such as racism, alienation, and marginalization also in his biographical novels *Dancing in the Dark* (2005) and *A View of the Empire at Sunset* (2018). *Dancing in the Dark*

[9] It was his travel across Europe that inspired him to write about marginalization and survival of different communities such as the Jews. Also, as there was no black diasporic history taught in his school, he remembers before he started reading African American writers, he "channelled a part of [his] hurt and frustration through the Jewish experience" (*European* 54).

presents an imagined account of the life of Bert Williams, a Caribbean-born American black face performer, whose career was shaped by racism and discrimination. And in his latest novel *A View of the Empire at Sunset*, Phillips deals with the sense of isolation and unbelonging through a fictional account of the life of the writer Jean Rhys.

The characterization in Phillips's fiction resists "easy classification" ("Necessary" 130). He avoids judging his characters and refuses an easy reduction of categorisations. He chooses, instead, to lead the reader to understand the individual acts of communication that connects them. In this way, his characterization seeks to show that "individuals are ultimately much more complicated than historical forces or historical events" ("Disturbing" 55). Phillips is not concerned with imposing an authorial voice or guide on the readers or the characters; rather, the reader is required to use their imagination to understand the construction of the characters' identity. His narratives mostly centre on the relationship between a white woman and a black man in a way to illustrate the inequalities of race and gender as well as the entangled histories of Britain and Africa. Unusual figures and unlikely encounters help demonstrate that these identities do not have an essence that forms stereotypes. Although they share common experiences of displacement and feelings of loneliness and unbelonging, they are all individualized to develop an anti-essentialist approach to identity.

Phillips's works of non-fiction can be considered as complementary to his creative writing. He deals with the complexity of diaspora experience, which he fictionalizes in his novels, and offers an insight into some recurring ideas as well as his thoughts on social issues. In his travelogues *The European Tribe* (1987) and *The Atlantic Sound* (2000), Phillips recounts the journeys that have shaped his writing. He gives a detailed account of his thoughts and experiences about Europe and its racial intolerance in *The European Tribe*. In *The Atlantic Sound*, he focuses on themes of home and identity considering his visit of the cities involved in the slave trade, Liverpool, Elmina, and Charleston. He describes the Atlantic, which he views as a contact zone for the African diaspora, as not just a reminder of the history of slavery but a space connoting transcultural exchange. In his later work *Foreigners: Three*

English Lives (2008), Phillips reimagines the lives of three black men Francis Barber, Randolph Turpin, and David Oluwale, who all shared the experience of discrimination and marginalization, to explore the issues of identity and belonging. He goes on to deal with the Atlantic and cultural plurality in *A New World* (2001). In this collection of essays, he conceptualizes the changing world, which is inhabited by a gradually globalised society to trace the changing notions of home, identity, and belonging. In his latest essay collection *Color Me English* (2011), he makes important remarks about his art and dwells on the capacity of fiction to foster tolerance and empathy. The collection traces some recurring ideas in Phillips' oeuvre. He repeatedly makes it clear that he belongs to a generation that has been constantly reminded that they do not belong in Britain describing how the migrants have been "coloring England" (12) and he has been "colored English" (14). Such wide-ranging thoughts and information about his life experience that he provides in these non-fictional works offer comprehensive insight into his oeuvre.

Mobility across borders and its memory dimension are significantly relevant to Phillips's understanding of home. Traditional notions of home and identity are disputed in his novels. To him, "'home' is a word that is often burdened with a complicated historical and geographical weight. This being the case, travel has been important for it has provided African diasporan people with a means of clarifying their own unique position in the world" ("Necessary" 124-125). To illustrate this, Phillips imagines characters and situations centred around the theme of "crossing" the borders. Furthermore, his works reveal that multiple affiliations shaped by mobility, particularly migration, contribute to a fluid sense of identity. This fluidity formed by mobility is a marker of Phillips's own identity as well, and, as a writer, he thinks he is responsible for reflecting on this experience. In an interview with Alan Rice, Phillips states that "[t]here's an umbilical cord from my own life to this world of the Middle Passage[10] on both sides of the Atlantic. Because it comes with such a deep connection

[10] The Middle Passage denotes the second stage of the triangular slave trade where the enslaved Africans were taken to the Americas. Rawley and Behrendt depict the atrocity of the journey that took more than two months as follows: "Huge ships—crammed to the gunwales with Africans, packed together like spoons, chained to one another, daily exposed to white brutality, meager provisions, and hygienic neglect—in long, slow voyages suffered abnormally high mortality rates for their hapless passengers" (243).

to my own life, it comes with – a phrase that's very familiar - the burden of responsibility" ("A Home" 366). He feels responsible because the history of slavery is a part of his identity and a "cultural and/or historical baggage" due to his "African origin" and there are "huge absences" in the historical account about the destruction caused by the trade (366). In view of this, as Ledent notes, to Phillips, "history is the best way of knowing where you have come from, and hence of knowing where you are going to, provided it is not idealised, but assessed with honesty and open-mindedness" (*Caryl* 2). Since the cultural and psychological dimensions of the Middle Passage largely remained unrecorded, and "the narrative of slavery and the subsequent diaspora" has been "misrepresented," he feels the need "to repair that narrative" ("A Home" 366). As a writer who recollects the unrecorded moments in black history, Phillips engages with the transcultural memory of Britain and the black Atlantic. To uncover the memory and repair the misrepresentations to demand a responsible revision of the past, he revisits those absences.

Phillips's works have received critical attention mainly from the perspectives of postcolonial studies and diaspora studies that theorize representations of black subjectivity and issues such as displacement, home, hybridity, immigration, and displacement. Bénédicte Ledent gives a critical survey of Phillips's fiction in her monograph *Caryl Phillips* (2002) that provides a thorough contextual analysis of his works published between 1985 and 1997. As she argues, "displacement" plays a "pervasive role" and is "the cornerstone" of his writing (1). Ledent has also published extensively on his subsequent novels, mainly analysing the fragmented structure (2001). She focuses on the themes of belonging (2004), ambiguity (2005), hybridity (2007), loss (2017), familial disruption (2017), and compares his writing with that of Jean Rhys's (2019). Another monograph, titled *Caryl Phillips* was published in 2007 by Helen Thomas. She examines the historical setting and narrative content in Phillips's drama, prose, and fiction by discussing the role of racism, slavery, and colonialism in his works. Phillips's exploration of trauma of slavery has also been the focus of scholarly attention. Nick Bentley, for instance, focuses on trauma and loss in Phillips's novels in the light of contemporary trauma studies (2017). Another scholar, Stef Craps focuses on "traumatic memories of racist or anti-semitic violence and

oppression" in *Higher Ground* and *The Nature of Blood* (191). In line with trauma theories, Michael Rothberg's theory of multidirectional memory offers a theoretical perspective to analyse Phillips's novels. Rothberg himself studies the Holocaust memory in Phillips's works in his article "Fractured Relations: The Multidirectional Holocaust Memory of Caryl Phillips" (2011). Similarly, Samantha Reive Holland (2017) and Sarah Webb (2020) explore the multidirectional memory of racism and anti-semitism in Phillips's fiction. Memory is a widely discussed theme particularly in *Crossing the River*, as the introductory lines of the novel refer to the "chorus of a common memory" (1) of Africa. Ledent focuses on memory as a theme and argues that the novel is "built around historical and literary archives, in the sense that it rewrites and echoes other narratives" ("Caryl" 12). Similarly, Lars Eckstein, in his *Remembering the Black Atlantic: On the Poetics and Politics of Literary Memory* (2006), analyses memory in Phillips's *Cambridge* in the light of earlier phases of memory studies conceptualized by Aleida Assmann (1999) and Paul Ricoeur (2000). He reads the novel from a perspective considering colonial texts and images as mnemonic tools that constitute an intertextual dimension. Evidently, Phillips's fiction has been analysed mainly in terms of postcolonial elements. In these studies, memory appears a thematic element that organizes textual unity through historical narratives; therefore, it usually remains in the background as a theoretical perspective. Furthermore, Phillips's works have not been examined in the light of the notion of transcultural memory, which constitutes the theoretical framework of this study. By dealing with the black Atlantic experience as a medium of transcultural memory, this study offers a new theoretical foundation to study Phillips's work.

Memory and Phillips's Fiction

With the rise of interest in themes of historical traumas and their consequences, memory has become one of the most discussed topics in a variety of academic disciplines, particularly, in the humanities and social sciences over the past decades. The twenty-first century, during which memory has been linked with the Holocaust, colonialism, slavery, world wars, migration, terror, and historical places, is thereby

considered “the era of memory” (Hoffman 203) and marks the emergence of memory studies. Since the 1980s, the cumulative effects of historical moments have raised questions of coming to terms with the past, which have made memory concerns more compelling. Lucy Bond and Jessica Rapson believe that “the heightened importance of identity politics in the late 1980s and 1990s; confrontations with the legacies of colonialism, … and the apparent decline in national affiliations and ideologies as a grounding for identity” are the main reasons why memory studies has emerged as a prominent academic field (15).

It was the “memory boom” of the 1990s that brought memory to a central position in literary and cultural studies (Huyssen 18). In his “The Memory Boom: Why and Why Now?” David Blight explains the reason for the increased interest in memory during the late twentieth century as follows:

> the bloody history of the twentieth century made us more concerned with how nations organize their pasts, how they forge creation stories, invent traditions, and how and why great violence can be committed in the name of memory. As national identity became a prime subject in many disciplines in the second half of the twentieth century, following on the disintegration of the empires which themselves now have to explain their pasts to increasingly pluralistic and sceptical populations, how could “memory studies” be far behind? (241)

Particularly, studies on World War II and the Holocaust have contributed to the creation of a memory consciousness since the events began to be studied as part of the other atrocities in history such as slavery and colonialism. Commemorational events of the traumatic past and the emergence of new subjectivities with the spreading multiculturalism helped develop new perspectives on recollecting the past. This increasing interest in the recollection of the past has also been made easier with the advance of new transportation and communication technologies that increased accessibility to knowledge.

The sustained preoccupation with memory in various disciplines has long been the case in literary studies, too. The question of memory particularly has characterized much of black British writing, with which recent scholarly works tend to engage by combining postcolonial concepts with the concerns of diaspora, cultural diversity, and British history. Britain’s imperial past, colonial engagements, and subsequent migration flow have contributed to its identity which is further marked by ethnic

diversity and interconnectedness of various cultures with the rapid rise of globalisation in the wake of the century. The rise of multicultural belongings as a consequence of migration flows has rendered the country's history rooted in an increasingly interconnected world. As such, memory provides a perspective and a vantage point allowing for an interrogation of past and its effects on present, particularly in literature of migration and literary genres such as memoir, autobiography, and neo-slave narratives. It has a constitutive role not only in shaping the subjectivity of individuals but also in the construction of national identities. More significantly, memory offers alternatives to official versions of imperial history, which recollects the past to persist its exclusive identity. By providing empowerment to those whose voice remains unheard in history, memory creates a site of resistance against oppression and victimization. As such, relevant concepts such as home, migration, identity, cultural heritage, and displacement display a memory dimension in literature.

Memory is presently conceptualized as a fluid phenomenon that crosses cultural and national borders (Bond and Rapson; Erll; Crownshaw). However, in the earlier phases of studies on memory, it was studied mainly in relation to nation and national identity. Memory was thought to be confined to particular places within borders and communities such as nation-states. The notion of belonging to a social group (or nation-state) as a marker of consciousness and identity was taken for granted and laid the groundwork for the studies of scholars such as Maurice Halbwachs, who proposes the idea of "social frameworks" defining remembrance (*Les Cadres Sociaux de la Mémoire* 1925), and Pierre Nora, whose concept of "sites of memory" (*Les Lieux de Mémoire* 1984-1992) focuses on French national memory. In these studies on collective memory, memory is viewed as a phenomenon confined to a single community, or nation, that is defined by institutions, which mostly depend on a shared essence, values, or culture. The remembrance of the past is rendered specific to the members of that community who believe in the existence of a shared heritage binding them to each other. Therefore, memory research was deeply involved in the primacy of a national framework until the late 1990s. A large proportion of studies on memory was based on the assumption that nation, or any stable, essentialised frame of collectivity, is the definer of identity and the ways to remember and represent the past.

Such an approach to memory largely depends on an ethnocentric and racialized understanding of a collective past; therefore, the contingency of cultural and national frames is ignored in these studies.

As the nation-states lose power and prominence in the global arena, the boundaries dividing nations and cultures have increasingly become blurred signalling a transformation. The ways both individual and collective memories are made have posed questions relating to the role of memory in the retrieval of past events and construction of identity. This change is reflected on the perspective towards the working of memory, which gradually shifts from its nation-centredness to focus on the mobility of memory. To be more precise, over the last decades, studies on memory have taken a "transcultural turn" (Bond and Rapson) that unsettles the focus on national confines in the previous studies and, instead, foregrounds the effects of cultural exchange through worldwide dispersal of populations and other forms of interaction on the recollection of the past. Evidently, the last twenty years mark the emergence of a great increase in the number of scholarly conceptualizations that suggest a perspective calling into question the received essentialist identifications regarding the issues of nation, culture, race, and ethnicity. Astrid Erll defines "transcultural memory" as a "*research perspective*, a focus of attention, which is directed towards mnemonic processes unfolding *across* and *beyond* cultures" ("Travelling" 9). Transcultural perspectives on memory aim to shift the focus of memory studies from an emphasis on the confines of national remembrance and divisive borders to the ways in which memory circulates across boundaries. That is to say, transcultural memory contests the reductive categories of nation and culture as homogeneous and divisive spheres.

This study considers Paul Gilroy's concept of the black Atlantic as a medium that enables the movement of memory across borders to create the transcultural memory of Britain. The emphasis on mnemonic trajectories and cultural exchange across borders in the concept of transcultural memory is exemplified in Gilroy's examination of the "transcultural reconceptualization" (17) of "the black Atlantic" in his seminal work *The Black Atlantic: Double Consciousness and Modernity* (1993). Migration brings along memories and offers a context of cultural encounter and

hybridization; therefore, transcultural memory shares a common perspective with Gilroy's concept of the black Atlantic, which is a cultural formation based on the intersecting histories of Africa, Britain, and America, the three territorial entities of the triangular slave trade. Gilroy reconsiders Western discourse of modernity and the history of enslavement to emphasize the engagement of black peoples in the development of modernity. Challenging the binaries constructed mainly by modernity, he seeks to divorce the idea of "blackness" (8), which is a cultural identity rather than a racial category, from a given essence to reiterate its fluidity and diversity. Accordingly, the movement of black peoples across the Atlantic has a formative role that helps reconstruct diaspora identity through a continuing exchange of cultures. Gilroy's idea of the black Atlantic cultural identity is formed by diasporic experience, and thereby, is parallel to the perspectives of transcultural memory that focus on the constitution of memory through movement beyond the constraints of nation states and cultural particularities.

The shared anti-nationalist perspective of transcultural memory and the black Atlantic concept provides a theoretical foundation to explore how movements across national and cultural borders throughout ages have shaped cultural dynamics and racial politics in Britain and their representations in Caryl Phillips's literary production. His engagement with British history is a significant aspect of his works as the past still informs the present. Hence, focusing closely on *Crossing the River* (1993), *A Distant Shore* (2003), and *In the Falling Snow* (2009), this study argues that Phillips's works of fiction illustrate the movement of the black Atlantic memory across the seemingly impermeable borders to lay bare the interconnectedness of Britain and the black Atlantic and to unsettle the homogeneous construction of categories such as nation, culture, and identity. In these novels, the transcultural memory of Britain, which is constituted by its shared past with the black Atlantic, reveals divergent individual stories that challenge any totalizing historiography and the understanding of blackness as a reductive category of identity. As will be explored in this study, the persistence of the past in the present emerges as a force that constructs both individual and national identities in the selected novels. In these novels, which chart the evolution of the black diaspora, the transcultural memory runs contrary to British national amnesia and

brings to the fore multiple representations of diaspora experience. In order to investigate how memory contributes to the construction of identity and to the way individuals deal with social change and conflict through remembrance and forgetting, this study will look at the social and political aspects of Phillips's illustration of the black diaspora and conceptualize the diverse ways in which memorial practices negotiate relationships between different communities. In this sense, rendering manifest the ways in which the accounts of the past create a contesting narrative and transcultural resistance, this study establishes a relationship between the concept of transcultural memory and the thematic content and narrative structure of the novels. The formal elements of the novels mirror their thematic engagement with mobility; therefore, this study also examines the ways Phillips uses a mnemonic strategy that is shaped by a fragmented narrative structure and a temporal zone shifting back and forth to demonstrate the effects of the past on the present.

The major reason why this study juxtaposes *Crossing the River*, *A Distant Shore*, and *In the Falling Snow* is that when read together these novels reveal a transcultural consciousness that allows for uncovering the complex ways of identifications on both individual and national levels. In fact, each of these can be read as constituents of the same story, which starts with the transatlantic slave trade and continues in contemporary Britain. As such, this study maps out the terrains of the formation and evolution of the black diaspora and diasporic consciousness as expressed in Phillip's literary production. The subject matter of these novels expands beyond the social issues of British society to draw attention to a wider historical context, from the slave trade conducted in the 1800s to contemporary multicultural Britain, where race begins to lose its prominence as a primary marker of identity. The texts to be analysed in this study introduce many forms of mobility ranging from the transatlantic slave trade, GI soldiers during World War II, refugee experience, and post-war migration. The memory dimension constituted by such mobility suggests the potential of transcultural frameworks that lay bare the heterogeneity of nation and culture. These narratives undermine the assumed homogeneity of collective identity that is shaped by nationalist approaches. As such, in order to have a better understanding of the movement of memory through ages as well as to trace the nuances

that have emerged in Phillips's approach to the issues of race and belonging over the course of sixteen years, these novels will be analysed in a chronological order.

Phillips deals with the past to reveal the foundations of the current problems, the continuing legacy of the empire in contemporary Britain. As it is revealed in the novels selected for close analysis, the assumption of a homogeneous white nation informed by the colonialist racial discourse is still a problem and the basis of the exclusionary attitude and practices in British society. In this sense, Phillips's excavation of migratory links that transcend national borders draws attention to plurality of identity and provides a site of transcultural memory, through which a theoretical articulation is formed in this study. Through his exploration of both the particularities and the commonalities in the experience of the black diaspora, Phillips unsettles the essentialist assumptions regarding race, ethnicity, and culture and lays bare the constructedness of such concepts as nation and identity. That is to say, as will be argued in the following chapters, Phillips demands a responsible revision of the history of the black Atlantic and its effects on the current British society by disclosing transcultural memory across presumably disparate trajectories.

The exploration of the transculturality of memory and its role in identity construction in Phillips's fiction goes beyond the examinations of the colonial/postcolonial demarcations and provides a perspective on the mobility of memories and its contribution to bridge the gap between the past and the present in the history of the black Atlantic. Thus, adopting a transcultural perspective on Phillips's works offers a framework for considering and re-evaluating the representation of interconnectedness between cultures and histories particularly between the locations of the transatlantic slave trade. Memory and its role in the construction of identity, as argued here, not only illustrates the interconnectedness between Britain and its misrepresented past of the slave trade but also maps out the terrains on which black British identity is forged. As such, the theoretical framework of this study engages with transcultural memory and Gilroy's concept of the black Atlantic, thereby constituting a chart of the evolution of black diaspora as represented in Phillips's fiction and relating these theories to the ongoing debates about cultural attachment and diversity.

Another major commonality between these three novels is that they locate memories within fragmented narrative structures. What brings memory forth in these novels, as will be argued in the analysis chapters, is Phillips's mnemonic strategy. He employs a fragmented plot structure that unfolds in a non-linear narrative form, shifting back and forth in time and place, to demonstrate the effects of the past on the present as well as the movement of memory across cultural and national boundaries. The interruption of the storyline by glimpses at the past characterizes all three novels. These works feature the disruption of a chronological narrative as a part of both characterization and the thematic engagement with detachment and dislocation. In other words, the formal strategy used is relevant to the issues raised in the narrative. In line with the content, the formal structure of his works is established on a complex framework to deal with the diasporic experience. Phillips problematizes and challenges the typical construction of the notions of identity and nation, which stems from the persistent ideological forgetting of Britain's colonial past and what he calls the British "mythology of homogeneity" ("Extravagant" 289). Introducing various divergent individual stories in fractured memories, the narratives both stand for the disruption in the lives of diasporic characters and counteract the validity of official British accounts of history that have been informed by the colonial mindset. As Phillips states, it is a way to "subvert people's view of history by engaging them with character" and "to look at that history from a different angle-through the prism of people who have nominally been written out of it, or have been viewed as the losers or victims in a particular historical storm" ("Crossing" 26). In doing so, he undermines the reductive approaches to identity, which is centred on race and nation, by use of memory that crosses the established categories as well as territorial borders.

In keeping with the aims of this study outlined above, the following chapter establishes a theoretical framework regarding the paradigm shifts in memory studies and its relation to the black Atlantic concept. Firstly, the notion of the collective memory conceptualized by Maurice Halbwachs and Pierre Nora will be discussed, underlining its emphasis on nation as a force that organizes the remembrance of the past. Then, the term, "cultural memory" will be explored in relation to the diminishing effect of nation in defining mnemonic practices. With the movement away from the

confines of nation-states towards an emphasis on culture as a holder of memory, the perspectives of memory studies have changed. Lastly, transcultural memory, which emerges as a term to encapsulate recent approaches to memory, will be explicated in relation to its emphasis on movement and migration. Paul Gilroy's concept of the black Atlantic will also be explored with regard to its concern with the multifariousness of black identity. The context of transcultural memory will be interrogated through its divergences from traditional approaches to memory in order to demonstrate the common ground between its emphasis on movement and Gilroy's accentuation of the influence of migratory routes on the black diaspora.

The third chapter analyses *Crossing the River* to discuss how transcultural memory is constituted by the movement of black populations from Africa across the Atlantic. It will be argued that the novel investigates the entangled memory of the black Atlantic to challenge the nativist approaches to identity and the totalizing accounts of the black Atlantic history. Memory serves as a ground of identity formation, which weaves continuity between various time spans, locations, and peoples in the novel. First, the setting of the novel will be explored in the light of roots and routes of the black peoples as conceptualized by Gilroy. This will be followed by a thorough analysis of the mnemonic structure of the novel to discuss the ways in which the novel illustrates transcultural movements and connections that constitute the possible origins of the present black diaspora.

The fourth chapter focuses on *A Distant Shore* to examine the novel's engagement with the transcultural memory of Britain and the unsettlement of the nationalist discourse through the reminders of the imperial legacy. Set against the claims of the nationalist discourse, the novel introduces a refugee figure from Africa, as a reminder of the atrocities of the imperial past, to lay bare the reasons why people from distant countries immigrate to Britain. This chapter will first analyse how the narrative structure of the novel unravels the transcultural memory of Britain. Phillips employs a mnemonic narrative strategy through the novel's fragmented structure and shifting narrative voice to display the persistence of the past in the present and the movement of memory across cultural and national boundaries. Then it will be argued that the novel contests the idea of the homogeneous nation by drawing parallelisms

between the Middle Passage and the refugee flow from Africa. In doing so, it will illustrate the cross-border reach of memories that is ignored by the nationalist discourse.

The fifth chapter studies *In the Falling Snow* in terms of the role of memory in intergenerational relations as an essential constituent of identity construction in the black diaspora. This chapter argues that the novel traces the evolution of the notion of black Britishness over the second half of the twentieth century and proposes new transcultural trajectories through its engagement with Eastern European migrants. Also, the introduction of a third-generation mixed-race character, whose attachment to Britain differs from that of his father's, lends itself well to an analysis of the relevance of the issue of race to the third generation and suggests new ways of identifications beyond the confines of the black diaspora. To this end, first, how the novel illustrates intergenerational relationships will be examined, and then the transcultural exchanges inherent in the era of globalisation will be explored.

CHAPTER 2

INTERSECTIONS OF "TRANSCULTURAL MEMORY" AND "THE BLACK ATLANTIC"

2. 1. Major Paradigms in Memory Studies

This chapter will discuss memory as a constitutive element that transcends boundaries and allegedly fixed markers of belonging in the construction of identity. Analysing memory from a transcultural perspective requires paying attention to how it emerged as a reaction to previous studies on memory. Therefore, it is helpful to give a brief account of the earlier studies on memory before dealing with the latest approaches.

2.1.1. "Collective Memory"

Although the earliest studies on memory can be traced back to antiquity, when philosophers considered memory in a context that concentrated on the individual as the centre and likened memory to a storehouse that restored all knowledge, it was not until the early twentieth century that studies began to take a more scientific approach to memory. French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs, who was a student of Émile Durkheim, used the term *la mémoire collective,* "collective memory"[11], in his foundational study *Les Cadres Sociaux de la Mémoire* (*On Collective Memory*)[12]

[11] Halbwachs gets the credit for coining the term but, by then, the term was used in a variety of contexts. As Olick, Vinitzky-Seoussi, and Levy state, the "common cognates … were 'public memory' and 'racial memory'" for the term collective memory (Introduction 16).

[12] *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire*, first published in 1925, was not available in English until Lewis Coser edited and translated a large part of it as *On Collective Memory* in 1992. In 1950, *La mémoire collective*, a collection of essays by Halbwachs, was edited and published posthumously in French, and was translated into English in 1980 under the title *The Collective Memory*.

published in 1925. The usage of the term is traceable to Durkheim's *Les Formes Elémentaires de la vie Religieuse (The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life)*[13] (1912), which is mainly about collective representations and commemorative rituals, through which ancestral memory is transmitted across generations. Durkheim was interested in the variability of the perception of the past in different forms of social structures. In a similar vein, another thinker of the time, Henri Bergson, was also concerned with memory and the variability of the ways of recording the past in his analysis of the individual experience of time in *Matière et Mémoire* (*Matter and Memory*)[14] (1896). Informed by Bergson and Durkheim's studies, Halbwachs laid the groundwork for the study of memory as a collective phenomenon and a constituent of social identity.

It was with Halbwachs's works in the early twentieth century that memory started to be studied in its social aspects. He provides an intellectual justification for the study of memory as a production of social networks, maintaining that

> it is in society that people normally acquire their memories. It is also in society that they recall, recognize, and localize their memories. … It is in this sense that there exists a collective memory and social frameworks for memory; it is to the degree that our individual thought places itself in these frameworks and participates in this memory that it is capable of the act of recollection. (*On Collective* 38)

The recollection of the past depends on the dynamics of the communities. Individuals remember the past according to their social interactions with the members of the group. In this sense, personal memories are recorded through the filter of our collective memories. The *cadres sociaux*, "social frameworks", are necessary for shaping and giving meaning to the experiences of individuals that contain memory images (41). The social frameworks he mentions have a large scope including family, class, generation, religion, traditions, and cultural practices. It is these social networks that assign "depth, coherence, [and] stability" to memory images (44). We acquire concepts of time and space and remember past events through communication with

[13] Durkheim, Émile. *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*. 1912. Edited by Mark S. Cladis, translated by Carol Cosman. Oxford UP, 2008.
[14] Bergson, Henri. *Matter and Memory*. 1896. Translated by N. M. Paul. Martino Fine Books, 2011.

our social circle. And through the interaction among group members, shared values among them are created over time. In other words, groups reconstruct the past collectively. Thus, individual and collective remembrances are mutually dependant.

For Halbwachs, in the creation of a shared memory, lived experience is in the foreground rather than the knowledge of the past. Therefore, in his theoretical treatment of memory, the distinction he makes between history and memory is significant. Accordingly, history and memory are mutually exclusive; while history is universal, collective memory is particular. First of all, history is a discipline that looks into cause-and-effect relations in events. As opposed to memory, history lacks continuity; it is a "record of changes" (86) since it divides time into periods. As Halbwachs further contends, "[o]ur memory truly rests not on learned history but on lived history" (*The Collective* 57). History is not directly experienced; it is learnt; thus, it is abstract and not related to the experience of the group. Its exploration of the past is "situated external and above groups" (80-81). As such, history remains external to the first-hand experience of memories and the historian "is not located within the viewpoint of any genuine and living groups of past or present" (82). Furthermore, while history is unitary as it represents an objective perspective without the restriction of a particular group, memory "retains from the past only what still lives or is capable of living in the consciousness of the groups keeping the memory alive" (80). Therefore, memory remains within the limits defined by the group and is preoccupied with the continuity from past to present, while history represents them differently by dividing time periods into fixed categories. Since memory involves the traditions, oral narratives, and rituals, it does not depend on fixed categories; rather, it is relative and fluid. In history, what the individual remembers personally is not taken into account. However, individual memory contributes to collective memory as individuals acquire materials from their social environment and produce memories by recalling and forgetting some parts of them. In this respect, individuals are aware of the continuity in collective remembering, but history, which remarks the discontinuities in different time periods, is outside the community that remembers the past in a certain way.

Halbwachs allocates several roles to individuals in the remembrance of the past. Individual memory is fundamental to collective memory because it connects

different and separate elements of the experience of the community that creates a whole out of many pieces over time. Yet, what matters is the collective consensus on memory of a group rather than what its members remember individually because collective consensus, which is informed by commemorative practices and social frameworks, has a more powerful influence on the way individuals recall the past and hence the construction and distribution of collective memory. On the one hand, memory is restructured according to the role the individual assumes since "we change memories along with our point of views, our principles, and our judgments, when we pass from one group to the other" (*On Collective* 81). This is related to how individuals judge the past events and to what extent they identify with it. Different identifications and value judgements may produce different memories situated in a social framework. On the other hand, the foundation of public remembrances come from the common products, images, artifacts, and places of the community rather than individuals' accounts of the past. As he states, "[t]he succession of our remembrances, or even our most personal ones, is always explained by changes occurring in our relationships to various collective milieus—in short, by the transformations these milieus undergo separately and as a whole" (*The Collective* 49). The self-image of the individual is shaped within that group; therefore, individuals remember the past by reconstructing it according to the interests of the group in a selective way.

The selective nature of memory makes it vulnerable to distortion because the community who constitutes the social frameworks is bound to a specific period and territory. As Halbwachs claims, "a remembrance is in very large measure a reconstruction of the past achieved with data borrowed from the present, a reconstruction prepared, furthermore, by reconstructions of earlier periods wherein past images had already been altered" (*The Collective* 68). Thus, by selecting what to remember, the group can reshape and rearrange the way the past is recollected according to its current interests. Besides, memories may evoke different associations in communities that live in different periods. This unreliable nature of memory raises questions about the political agenda of the institutions controlling commemoration. Only the memory of the events that are deemed useful are transmitted to the collective memory. Collective significance determines how to filter the past, but those who hold

the power select what parts of the past serve the common good. In this sense, as required by the common good determined by the interests of the dominant group, certain incidents of the past are repeatedly memorialized through social institutions in the present. In other words, social factors and power dynamics are at work in the processing of the past.

To Halbwachs, collective identity is constituted by an awareness of the past. Identity depends on the persistence of the shared values which give a sense of solidarity within the group. Every community needs a sense of continuity and a shared past for the construction of the sense of solidarity and identity. In this sense, memory is not only a social construct but also a mechanism for the society to reshape the past and collective identity. Although Halbwachs does not mention "nation" among the social frameworks exemplified in his work, his emphasis on the collective values belonging to a single community reminds one of the constructions of national remembrance and limited cultural confiners of nation-states. In his theory, memory is shaped and transmitted by social institutions which is evocative of a national identity because the notion of the past as a stable entity is informed by national ideological agendas. Eric Hobsbawm defines nation in the modern period as an ideological tool and a means of classifying and homogenizing the state's subjects (9-10). In a similar vein, in his *Imagined Communities* (1983), Benedict Anderson emphasizes that such collective remembrances and collectivities are imagined in order to retain the cohesion of the group. Accordingly, by evoking a collective past, a community constructs itself as a unity which depends on imagined unitary experiences. All unities that constitute nations are fundamentally imagined. Anderson explains that "[i]t is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (6). He considers nations as "cultural artifacts of a particular kind" (4). Their emergence and survival are grounded in the production and reproduction of cultural tools that stand for collective values. Thus, as Anderson maintains,

> regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship. Ultimately it is this fraternity that makes it possible, over the past two centuries, for so

> many millions of people, not so much to kill, as willingly to die for such limited imaginings. (50)

To build this sense of fraternity, the creation of a shared past is essential. To this end, the past is rendered specific to a single nation so that its members believe in the existence of a shared heritage that binds them to one another. The members of the dominant group within the nation perpetuate the collective past. They define the ways the citizens remember, which may become manifest in diverse forms, and constitute the traditional codes of a specific society to establish the boundaries of belonging. Moreover, in Halbwachs's conceptualization, memory and how long it lasts depends on the social power of the group. As the social frameworks change, the remembrances and the relationships among members change, as well. The variety of social frameworks, thus, contributes to the multiplicity of collective memory. Therefore, to ensure its continuity, "every collective memory requires the support of a group delimited in space and time" (Halbwachs, *The Collective* 84). Time gives a point of departure for the ordering of the commemorative events and provides the continuity of memory. As for space, it provides stability as "the group's image of its external milieu and its stable relationships with this environment become paramount in the idea it forms of itself" (13). Accordingly, it is time and space that give us a feeling of a reality; this relationship between time and space gives an illusion of a stable identity that does not change over time.

Halbwachs's studies paved the way for further research on memory. Drawing on Halbwachs, French historian Pierre Nora brought the concept of collective memory to historical research again after several decades. In the 1980s, dealing with the institutionalized forms of collective memories of the past, Nora grounded memory in "sites," where "memory crystallizes and secretes itself" ("Between" 7), in his multi-volume collection of essays *Les Lieux de Mémoire* (*Realms of Memory*) (1984). Like Halbwachs, Nora believes that there are as many accounts of the past as communities. Nora differentiates between memory and history, as well, since, he argues, "memory attaches itself to sites, whereas history attaches itself to events" ("Between" 22). While memory is spontaneous, since it is "capable of lying dormant for long periods only to be suddenly reawakened," history has a critical standing and is "suspicious of

memory" (14). Nora further claims that memory and history stand in opposition because "history is perpetually suspicious of memory and its true mission is to suppress and destroy it" (8-9). While history focuses on the historical significance of the events, memory focuses on the continuity of the process between past and present.

Since the nation is an important research focus in his concept of memory, Nora's work has become a central project for the study of national remembrance. It is mainly concerned with how French national identity is formed through the sites of memory that have become symbols of the nation. As he explains, "*lieu de memoire* is any significant entity, whether material or non-material in nature, which by dint of human will or the work of time has become a symbolic element of the memorial heritage of any community" (12). As such, these sites refer to geographical locations, places and symbols such as monuments, ceremonies, regions, political movements, buildings as well as historical figures, days, works of art, and institutions that are "focal points of … national heritage" (30). National identity, which is informed by a shared past, is invested in these sites within the boundaries of national territory.

In Nora's concept of memory, the distinction of real and artificial memory is significant. Unlike Halbwachs, who assumes that collective memories are present all the time, to Nora "[w]e speak so much of memory because there is so little of it left" ("Between" 7). Accordingly, what we have is sites of memory that remind us of the past and connect us to national identity because we lost the connection with the past. In other words, sites of memory are the artificial substitutes for the lost past. He believes that we situate memory in sites because we no longer have access to the authentic experience of what we had in the past. To explain this, he emphasizes the social function of sites of memory in modern societies. To him, peasant culture was the repository of memory that had a mission to transmit social values. In such pre-modern societies, memory was preserved by means of oral traditions, rituals, and practices that were part of the daily life of the members of the community. However, in modern societies, with the effects of urbanization, such practices have become distant and begun to be seen from an analytical perspective. Therefore, we lost the authentic reminders of the past. Modern societies organize the past as historical periods, as if each was separate from one another. As such, history remains an

analytical subject while oral traditions disappear over time with the loss of traditional forms of commemoration. Emphasizing the preservation of traditions, Nora points out that before modernity, "history was holy because the nation was holy" (5). He defines modernity by its categories such as globalization, media, and technology. With the advent of modernity, the emphasis on the nation in the definition of state has gradually vanished and societies lost the living memory, which enables the continuity between the past and the present. To Nora, "there are *lieux de memoire*, sites of memory, because there are no longer *milieux de memoire*, real environments of memory" ("Between" 7). Therefore, as he argues, sites of memory are in fact substitutes for the past. That is to say, the twentieth century is a "historical age that calls out for memory because it has abandoned it" (12). Thus, he considers sites of memory as symbolic. Accordingly, sites of memory function as symbols to remind the past and offer a substitute for the memory that once provided a sense of belonging for "societies that had long assured the transmission and conservation of collectively remembered values, whether through churches or schools, the family or the state" (7). Also, he claims that sites of memory show "the presence of the past within the present" (4). To make up for the loss of the past, "[m]emory situates recollection in the sphere of the sacred" (19). Since we do not have the real places of memory, which stand for stability, we have created such monuments. These places of memory provide means for the commemoration of traditions and the maintenance of collective identities.

As both these discussions show, memory plays a significant role in the construction of nations. However, these approaches on the part of Halbwachs and Nora ignore the effects of the cultural exchange between different communities and the transmission of memory through cultural carriers that are beyond national borders. Thus, with the increase in the awareness of the contingency of national frames as a consequence of large-scale migration, the primacy of the national framework in memory research lost its validity.

2.1.2. From "Collective Memory" to "Cultural Memory"

Halbwachs's studies are considered as the root of the contemporary study of cultural memory (Erll, *Memory* 14). The emphasis he puts on the sociocultural

environment and individuals' relationship with their communities led the way to further studies on memory. However, in recent scholarship, which regards memory as a transcultural phenomenon, Halbwachs's emphasis on group consciousness and Nora's focus on preserving the national values have been replaced by another characteristic of memory. Memory is conceptualized as a fluid process which cannot be limited by a specific group, place, or event; rather, it is informed by a range of events beyond national assumptions. Thus, Halbwachs and Nora's theories of collective memory are problematized for their emphasis on stability and nation as a framework. Astrid Erll argues that in Halbwachs's work, the intersection of different social levels is acknowledged on the individual level as "multiple mnemonic memberships"; however, "the transcultural disappears as soon as the sociologist turns his attention from individual minds to group memories" ("Travelling" 15). She explains the reason for this hindrance as Halbwach's setting collective memory in opposition to historical memory and focusing on shared values forming a group identity. In a similar vein, Barbara Misztal criticizes Halbwachs for rejecting the individualistic perspective and assuming that collective identity precedes memory (54-55). As she argues,

> [t]he assertion that identity is already well established combined with the assumption that social identity is stable, makes Halbwachs' main argument (that social identity determines the content of collective memories) much less interesting. Due to the assumption that memory is determined by an already well-established identity, his theory also undervalues other functions of collective memory. (55)

Halbwachs takes the group which holds the power as the reference point to stabilize remembrance and ensure solidarity. Disapproving of his ignoring the fact that memory and history are both interdependent and in conflict, Misztal states that "today, Halbwachs' old-fashioned positivist concept of history is abandoned" and "prior to and following World War II, less traditional historians rejected the focus on the history of events and slowly shifted the study of history towards the examination of past rituals, practices and ways of thinking leading the way for the development of memory studies" (102). Halbwachs's ideas became less valid in the following years. The 1970s and 1980s focused on the ideological aspects of historical representation and how it

privileges those who hold the power. And today "remembering the past and writing about it no longer seem to be the innocent activities they were once taken to be" (Burke 98). Since memory is a means of making sense of the past, remembering does not simply mean recording the exact information; rather, it is an act of appropriating what the past holds to fulfil the demands of the present. The sense of unity fostered by the definitions of collective memory also fosters certain identities, patriotism, nationalism and manipulates the group to forget certain parts of history or to discriminate against certain individuals and collectives who remember the past events in a different way. Currently, the past is viewed as a construction and an unstable entity, which allows the interest in the studies on memory narratives of underprivileged communities to increase. Therefore, the emphasis of the former studies on social frameworks is problematized by later-day critics. Accordingly, the social frameworks in which the past is transmitted to later generations cannot be contained within the boundaries of a group's consciousness and sites. Likewise, Nora's theory has been questioned and expanded by scholars who focus on the relationship between sites of memory and culture. Erll considers nation as a restrictive parameter and argues that

> in the wake of Nora's project, which was quickly adopted virtually across the globe, cultural memory was reincarnated as, and became synonymous with, "national remembrance" … It is imagined as a formation situated within the boundaries of the hexagon and carried by an ethnically homogenous society. Nora's approach binds memory, ethnicity, territory, and the nation-state together, in the sense of a (mnemonic) space for each race. ("Travelling" 12).

This emphasis on the boundaries of the nation is a factor that renders his theories restrictive since he ignores the role of the dynamism of culture. Contrary to this exclusionary concept of memory, as Erll and Ann Rigney state, "memory can only become collective as part of a continuous process whereby memories are shared with the help of symbolic artefacts that mediate between individuals, and in the process, create community across both space and time" (Introduction 1). Jan Assmann also states that sites of memory express a shared knowledge for a group of people in a limited time and space ("Collective" 128). Such places maintain their meaning as long as the group exists; therefore, he argues, what matters should be the cultural activity of the group that performs the act of remembrance. In this sense, the transmission of experience through the practices of memory plays a crucial role in the formation of

collective memory. Likewise, Jay Winter points out that "sites of memory inevitably become sites of second-order memory, or postmemory, that is, they are places where people remember the memories of others, those who survived the events marked there" (254). The places are commemoration areas for the future generations rather than the ones who experienced the events there. Thus, such conceptions as social frameworks and sites of memory fail to consider the effects of culture and cultural transformation on the acts of remembrance over the years.

With the increasing awareness of the insufficiency of national frames to explore memory, culture has become the focus of memory studies. As culture is partly constituted by the transmission of specific norms and values from previous generations, memory plays a central role in the cultural identity of a community. Unlike the territorial boundaries offered by the previous models, cultural memory is thought to be dynamic, always in a process through which individuals or groups reconfigure their identity in relation to past and its present reflections. The term "cultural memory" was introduced by Jan and Aleida Assmann in the early 1990s and further developed in the following decades. J. Assmann defines cultural memory as "a collective concept for all knowledge that directs behaviour and experience in the interactive framework of a society and one that is obtained through generations in repeated societal practice and initiation" ("Collective" 112). Drawing on Halbwach's concept, J. Assmann introduces the term "communicative memory" and differentiates it from cultural memory. Cultural memory gives a sense of unity with the other members of the group who share a common past. The identity of a given society is constructed upon this selected version of the past. However, communicative memory refers to the "varieties of collective memory that are based exclusively on everyday communications" ("Communicative" 116). Therefore, it does not involve "cultural characteristics"; instead, it is flexible, formless and shaped in accordance with the requirements of daily life. Hence, cultural memory and communicative memory are complementary concepts. While cultural memory has fixed elements "maintained through cultural formation (texts, rites, monuments) and institutional commemoration (recitation, practice, observance)" ("Collective" 129), communicative memory is

“non-institutional” and gives a sense of group identity through communicative ties “that bind together families, groups, and generations” (“Communicative” 111).

Commemoration is a cultural practice and may vary historically in the concept of cultural memory. According to Erll and Rigney, cultural memory is constituted by “‘media’ of all sorts - spoken language, letters, books, photos, films” that provide “frameworks for shaping both experience and memory” (1). These cultural products are active tools that “mediate between the individual and the world” and create networks in diverse ways (1). As cultural formations, such as literary and artistic canons, change with technological developments over time, cultural remembrance transforms as well. Thus, cultural memory is connected with history. Contrary to Halbwachs’s distinction between memory and history, Aleida Assmann claims that memory and history cannot be seen as opposites, because no history is entirely detached from memory (“Transformation” 55). While Halbwachs conceptualizes a dichotomous model between the two, A. Assmann considers memory and history as complementary modes of remembering. Also, she makes a distinction between “functional memory” and “storage (archival) memory”: storage memory keeps all the information and provides a basis for the functional memory that selects and interprets the material (*Cultural* 127). Storage memory depends on the past, while functional memory looks to the future. They have a significant role in identity formation. To A. Assmann, memory holds a liminal space between past and present especially for those individuals who are in a marginalised position in a society. While storage memory stands for what past and the ignored experiences of the individuals hold, the transformation from the past to the present is represented in functional memory. Since marginalised groups tend to experience alienation and the threat of the loss of their cultural memories, functional memory provides a reconciliation between the two experiences. Similarly, while functional memory determines the characteristics of a nation, storage memory contains what is hidden behind and remains in the background. When it comes to the surface, there occurs transformation in the functional memory. Also, A. Assmann makes a distinction between memory as *ars* and memory as *vis* (*Cultural* 17). The former one is the model suggested by the ancient thinkers. Memory is regarded as a storehouse in which knowledge is kept and can be recalled in the

present. The latter one, on the other hand, considers how much that knowledge can change during the time span between the past and the present. As such, the concept of memory as *vis* views remembering as a reconstructive process in which forgetting also has a role. This brings to mind Halbwachs's emphasis on the limited role of the individual. In his understanding of memory, the individual experience of the past is particular but its subsequent remembrance is enabled by social frameworks. The social nature of the act of remembering enables the sharing of memory even if an individual member of the group did not directly experience the event in the past. In contrast, A. Assmann contends that it is cultural memory that conceptualizes such remembering (20). It is through the elements of culture that a society can remember and transmit what happened in the past.

The major thread running through these modellings of memory is the rejection of the formerly pervasive model of remembering which takes collective remembering and belonging to a specific group as the marker of identity. However, as Ann Rigney states, "'collective' and 'cultural' memory are two sides of the same coin and that cultural and social processes feed into each other" (Rigney, "Remembrance" 242). The emphasis on a stable collective identity in the previous phases of memory studies rests on discourses of homogeneity, which lead to exclusionary modes of being. These lines of thought depend on some container elements such as seemingly impermeable borders and boundaries that are national, political, religious, cultural, linguistic etc.[15] Yet, culture cannot be considered territorially bound; therefore, the cultural paradigm has been expanded towards a more transcultural perspective. In other words, to define today's cultural concerns, new approaches to memory that focus on its dynamic nature and how memory circulates have been developed.

[15] In a similar vein, Bhabha argues against the centralization of nation as the cultural container and emphasizes "hybridity" that allows for porous relations between the inside and the outside (*The Location* 57).

2.1.3. "Transcultural Memory"

In his introduction to *Transcultural Memory*, Rick Crownshaw points out that "[i]n recent years, memory studies have travelled from the collective to the cultural to the transcultural" (1). Over the past decades, the perspective of memory studies has shifted from an emphasis on national and cultural remembrance towards the questions centring around the transcultural dynamics by which memory transcends the confines of national and cultural particularity. That is to say, the "transcultural turn" (Bond and Rapson 2014) in memory studies is an attempt to problematize the homogenizing, nation-centred perspective of the previous conceptualizations.

The German philosopher Wolfgang Welsch developed his concept of "transculturality"[16] in the 1990s, claiming that "contemporary cultures are characterized by cross-cutting elements – and in this sense are to be comprehended as transcultural rather than monocultural" ("Transculturality" 194). Welsch gives "a new twist" to the word "transcultural," which he explains as follows:

> In the older anthropological and ethnological discussion, 'transcultural' referred to transcultural invariances. My objective, on the contrary, was to use it to describe a strikingly new, contemporary feature of cultures originating from their increased blending. The main idea was that deep differences between cultures are today diminishing more and more, that contemporary cultures are characterized by cross-cutting elements – and in this sense are to be comprehended as transcultural rather than monocultural. … So my basic intuition was that a conceptual update was necessary. (194)

The monocultural comprehension he mentions is a characteristic of "single cultures" (194). As he explains, single cultures date back to the end of the eighteenth century and consist of "three elements: social homogenization, ethnic consolidation and intercultural delimitation" (194). In these traditional conceptualizations, the interconnectedness of cultures around the world is ignored; culture is regarded as specific to a community within the borders of a geographical area and differentiated from one another. However, contemporary cultures are characterized by permeations

[16] The term was first coined as "transculturation" by Fernando Ortiz in 1940.

and hybridization formed as a result of migrations, communication systems, and economic interdependencies (197).

As Welsch remarks, "[f]or *every* culture, all *other* cultures have tendencially come to be inner-content or satellites" ("Transculturality" 198). Drawing on Welsch's ideas, Astrid Erll maintains that "cultures constructed upon the assumption of an isomorphy between territory, social formation, mentalities, and memories are called in transcultural studies: 'container-culture'" ("Travelling" 12). The notion of container cultures fails to describe today's cultural concerns. The inherent transculturality of cultures is ignored in Halbwachs and Nora's concepts of collective memory. Some memory scholars make a critique of Nora's concept of memory for ignoring the colonial history of France and setting nation as a framework to configure memory and identity. Likewise, Halbwachs's concept ignores the transmission of memory outside the social frameworks. In the latest studies, however, memory is viewed as a force that redefines social and cultural formations and creates links between them. In her critique of the primacy of the national frame, Erll maintains that the notion of single cultures, or container cultures, "generates racism and other forms of tension between local, ethnic, and religious groups" ("Travelling" 13). In a similar vein, in their introduction to *Memory Unbound*, Bond, Craps, and Vermeulen mention the homogenizing aspect of national memory regimes and how such effects sideline the ways in which memory travels across the boundaries of the nation-state (4). In the introductory chapter to *The Transcultural Turn* Lucy Bond and Jessica Rapson build upon Welsch's definition of transculturality and underline that the dynamics of transcultural memory are constituted by "the travelling of memory *within* and *between* national, ethnic and religious collectives" and "forums of remembrance that aim to move *beyond* the idea of political, ethnic, linguistic, or religious borders" (19). The understanding of memory embedded within the confines of a single culture ignores these cultural dynamics outside a specific geographical area. Bond and Rapson trace the emergence of the "single cultures" to the ideals of the Enlightenment (7), a period that coincides with the rise of nationalism. The notion of the past as a stable entity is mostly informed by nationalist ideological agendas. As Katharine Hodgkin and Susannah Radstone also claim, "[i]n nationalist movements and in achieved nation states alike, the appeal to

memory articulates the narrative of the nationalist past. … Memory is thus at the heart of nationalist struggles" (169). In this sense, the emphasis on a stable collective identity in the previous phases of memory studies connotes discourses of homogeneity, which, as pointed out earlier, leads to exclusionary modes of being. These lines of thought depend on such container elements as allegedly stable borders including national, religious, cultural, linguistic boundaries. However, the idea of the container culture as a homogeneous entity has lost its validity when the nation-states started to lose power and prominence in the global arena, especially after World War II. Accordingly, with the wave of decolonization, postcolonial discourses become influential in providing the foundation for the transcultural turn as a critical movement that rejects "the model of container culture in favour of a more fluid and transient paradigm of relations between societies" (Bond and Rapson 9). This notion of the fluidity of culture constitutes the major paradigm of contemporary memory studies. To be more precise, transcultural memory studies complicate the notion of container-cultures by foregrounding the movement of memory across temporal, spatial, and cultural borders that are established upon cultural and national particularities.

As Erll explains, "memory fundamentally means movement: traffic between individual and collective levels of remembering, circulation among social, medial, and semantic dimensions" ("Travelling" 20). The term transcultural is used to highlight its circulation across borders and its resistance to any stable, essentialised frame of collective formation. A. Assmann defines the prefix "trans" as referring to both going beyond borders, "national identifications," and to exploring "new forms of belonging, participation, and cultural identification" ("Transnational" 66). She further explains that the term transnational, which is commonly used interchangeably with transcultural, implies a perspective which is in line with "a general dissatisfaction with the dated nineteenth-century ideal of the autonomous, free, coherent, and bounded nation and the desire to move forward toward a new political imaginary that dissolves the nation in ongoing local and global reconfigurations" (66). As such, various classes, ethnicities, generations within a nation-state and beyond the boundaries of nations, diasporas, political formations, subcultures of music and sports are all elements that can "generate transnational networks of memory" (Erll, "Travelling" 13).

Over the last decades, many scholars have worked on the subject by creating various concepts and coining terms to describe the transcultural aspect and circulation of memory. While Rick Crownshaw, Lucy Bond and Jessica Rapson use the term transcultural memory (2013; 2014); Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider highlight the emergence of "cosmopolitan modes of memory" (2002); Andreas Huyssen's discusses "global memory" (2003); Alison Landsberg theorizes "prosthetic memory" (2004); Michael Rothberg theorizes a "multidirectional memory" (2009); Astrid Erll conceptualizes the term "travelling memory" (2011); Marianne Hirsch offers "postmemory" (2012). Ann Rigney and Chiara De Cesari name their concept "transnational memory" (2014). Rigney and De Cesari acknowledge that the transcultural and the transnational "resonate" in terms of the concerns and the focus on moving beyond confinements. Yet, the term "transnational" puts the emphasis on state-operated practices, and "the interplay and tensions between culture and social institutions", while "transcultural" is more related to change and diversity enabled by border crossing and its memory dimension. Rothberg also admits that the two terms overlap in their emphasis on border crossing but they are not identical. As he explains, "transcultural memory refers to the hybridization produced by the layering of historical legacies that occurs in the traversal of cultural borders, while transnational memory refers to scales of remembrance that intersect in the crossing of geo-political borders" ("Multidirectional" 130). Thus, in the concept of transcultural memory, the role of mobility, as well as the social transformation it brings along, is essential. All these terms and conceptualizations of memory offer a shared perspective that focuses on the mobility of memory beyond boundaries by challenging the hegemonic formations and material representation of memory founded on static traces of the past.

In these foundational contributions to memory studies, agencies of mobilization and transmission of memory are explained from various perspectives. Katharine Hodgkin and Susannah Radstone concentrate on the role of social institutions as means of the mediation of remembrance (169). For another scholar, Marienne Hirsch, memory is transmitted through generations through adoption. As she contends, the term postmemory

> describes the relationship that the "generation after" those who witnessed cultural or collective trauma bears to the experiences of those who came before, experiences that they "remember" only by means of the stories, images, and behaviors among which they grew up. But these experiences were transmitted to them so deeply and affectively as to seem to constitute memories in their own right. (107)

Postmemory is not just an act of recalling the past, but there is an "imaginative investment" involved in the process (107). Hirsch also claims that it is not necessarily a familial inheritance; cultural inheritance is also a factor in adopting memories. Similarly, Alison Landsberg's concept of "prosthetic memory" refers to the transmission of memory through technologies of mass culture and commodification of it (2-3). While Hirsch's concept mostly engages with traumatic memory, Landsberg's centres around the role of arts, such as cinema and literature, in creating an imaginative investment through empathy and aspiration. In relation to such concepts that theorize the mobility of memory, Crownshaw claims that prosthetic memory mainly derives from Anderson's *Imagined Communities* and Halbwach's social frameworks which are both "centripetal" in their descriptions because in these works the group identity is shaped by how the events are remembered collectively even if they are not directly experienced by the members of the group. However, Landsberg's model is "centrifugal," like Assmann's cultural memory, since in her conceptualization, memory transcends the group boundaries (Crownshaw 3). As he further argues, the dynamism of cultural memory makes it centripetal, too since it reinforces the group's remembrance through its wider participation. He views it as an assimilationist model as in the case of Nora's sites of memory in which memory is "imagined as preserved and crystallised in particular texts, sites or realms" (3). Therefore, Crownshaw offers transcultural memory as a concept to highlight the dynamic nature of memory pointing out that "it resists ideologies and politics that would homogenise cultural memory and naturalise it as such, revealing instead not just the ideological and political contingencies at play, but the inherently transcultural nature of cultural memory" (3).

Michael Rothberg looks at the mobility of memory from another perspective by juxtaposing different historical events. He refers to transnational connections as "possibilities for counter-narratives and new forms of solidarity that sometimes

emerge when practices of remembrance are recognised as implicated in each other" ("A Dialogue" 31). Hence, he offers a critique of competitive representations of historical traumas in his concept of multidirectional memory. He brings together the Holocaust memory and the decolonization struggles, as two historical traumas in public sphere, thereby linking the experiences of diverse minority groups. In his concept, different traumatic memories are in dialogue with each other to enable a mutual understanding. He acknowledges that each historical atrocity is distinct, but a multidirectional understanding of memory represents a form of "remembrance [which] cuts across and binds together diverse spatial, temporal and cultural sites" (*Multidirectional* 11). By positioning memory as being "subject to ongoing negotiation, cross-referencing, and borrowing; as productive and not privative" (3), he challenges the old-fashioned theories of collective memory suggesting instead that "the conception of competitive memory is a notion of the public sphere as a pregiven, limited space … In contrast, pursuing memory's multidirectionality encourages … ideological interactions with others: both the subjects and space of the public are open to continual reconstruction (5). Exploring the emergence of the public remembrance of the Holocaust alongside the postcolonial period, he provides a critique of the trivialization of histories and competitive models of memory, which is formed by a hierarchy between memories for ideological purposes. Thus, he notes, "the transcultural turn offers a necessary intervention into the study of memory at all levels: it draws attention to the palimpsestic overlays, the hybrid assemblages, the non-linear interactions, and the fuzzy edges of group belonging" (Rothberg, "A Dialogue" 32). In other words, he takes up the phenomenon of memory as a continuing process beyond ethnic and national confines.

Among these contributions to transcultural memory studies, Astrid Erll's "travelling memory" provides significant insight into this study as her concept specifically centres around the mobility of memory through migration and forms of movement of people, culture, and media. Erll uses "transcultural" as an umbrella term "for what in other academic contexts might be described through concepts of the transnational, diasporic, hybrid, syncretistic, postcolonial, translocal, creolized, global, or cosmopolitan" and she considers "transcultural memory" as a perspective

which "means transcending the borders of traditional 'cultural memory studies' by looking beyond established research assumptions, objects and methodologies" ("Travelling" 14). To describe travelling memory, she draws on the anthropologist James Clifford's concept of travelling culture, which describes culture as a formation that "traverses" by the mobility of people (Clifford 96). According to Erll, daily interactions, trade, migration, war, and media reception are among the contexts of this movement (16). As she states,

> [t]he term 'travelling memory' is a metaphorical shorthand, an abbreviation for the fact that in the production of cultural memory, people, media, mnemonic forms, contents, and practices are in constant, unceasing motion. … I claim that all cultural memory must 'travel', be kept in motion, in order to 'stay alive', to have an impact both on individual minds and social formations. Such travel consists only partly in movement across and beyond territorial and social boundaries. (12)

In other words, memory in motion constitutes knowledge, stories, and rituals, which are all beyond national remembrance.

Erll's emphasis on individuals and communities as carriers of memory through shared images, narratives, and knowledge is evocative of Gilroy's reconfiguration of the roots and routes of the black diaspora. In this sense, black Atlantic experience can be taken as an example of this spreading of memory through migration across social and territorial borders. Furthermore, the act of recalling the past is also a way of restoration of justice for the communities neglected or marginalized by official histories. Such communities form new identifications through memory but it is not necessarily voluntary all the time. Forced migration, for instance, both shapes new identifications and narratives of displacement. Thus, migration poses both mediation and contestation with the assumed identity of the host society as in the case of Britain. The existing identity of the nation is transformed by the migrant flows as the social frameworks of collective identity are extended. Migrant populations reinvent the memory of the nation by creating ruptures and new spaces for political, social, and cultural formations. In this sense, memory is a site of negotiation demanding the revision of past legacies. It subverts and interrupts official historiography and conventional narratives by providing alternative perspectives and accounts of the events in the past. Therefore, it can be held that memory is a means of opposing the

repressive powers that control the ways of remembering the past. Such an act of reclaiming the past by means of narratives, as Stuart Hall puts it, is "an act of cultural recovery" ("Ethnicity" 9). As such, memory has a counter-hegemonic role especially in the writings of those marginalised groups who write with a tendency to recover heritage and share their experiences that are diverse and disparate. Memory gives a chance to explore their cultural legacy and to rediscover a lost past.

The container-culture approach, according to which the nationalist agenda of the majority controls the remembrance of the past, assumes that the bond between the state and society is made possible by the reproduction of memory over time. Within such national frameworks, as Edward Said contends, collective memory works "by manipulating certain bits of the national past, suppressing others, elevating still others in an entirely functional way" ("Invention" 179). To manipulate the remembrance, nation needs to be selective. It is never "an inert and passive thing, but a field of activity in which past events are selected, reconstructed, maintained, modified, and endowed with political meaning" (185). This manipulated collective memory is a constituent of British colonialist racial discourse that favours a homogenous, white community with a shared past. In line with this, the legacy of the British Empire continually reproduces the binary between the centre and the margin, the nation-state and its colonies. Thus, the exclusive notion of Britishness depends on the concept of the container culture and an essentialist understanding of cultural identity that focuses on an imagined given essence attributed to a specific racial and ethnic background. Accordingly, race and ethnicity determine the boundaries of cultural belonging creating a homogenous cultural identity, thereby, excluding blackness as a category incompatible with Britishness. However, culture is not a given entity; it is constructed and reconstructed through difference and transformation (Derrida 1992; Said 1993; Bhabha 1994). In Hall's words, "[c]ulture is a production. It has its raw materials, its resources, its 'work of production.'… We are always in the process of cultural formation. Culture is not a matter of ontology, of being, but of becoming" (Hall, "Thinking" 556). This aspect of culture corresponds to memory, which challenges the stability of hegemonic representations of the past.

In contrast to the colonialist myth of purity, British culture is marked by heterogeneity and fluidity as a consequence of movements across the Atlantic world and the mingling of cultural forms from several sources of global networks. Mobility of memory is a process of creating networks between diverse commemorative tropes. It demonstrates that identities are products of historical and cultural process. The inherent connectedness of cultures problematizes the notion of the purity of nation. In today's heterogeneous societies, identities are in flux, cultures are intermingled. As Patterson and Kelly suggest, "[n]otions of globalization are everywhere. More and more we read or hear about efforts to think 'transnationally,' to move beyond the limits of the nation-state, to think in terms of borderlands and diasporas" (12). As a consequence of globalization and the influx of immigration, Britain has come to be perceived as multicultural. The demand for recognition by immigrant populations has been followed by destabilizing consequences in the cultural arena. In this respect, memory plays a crucial role in constructing identity and collective culture especially in the works of black British writers, who explore certain historical eras to provide fresh perspectives on the notions of nation, identity, and history. Erll considers literature as a medium of cultural remembrance (*Memory* 144). Particularly in migrant and diasporic literature, reflecting the past from a different perspective is remarkably significant in terms of reclaiming what official history has sidelined or ignored. Thus, those who are in a marginal position in society find the opportunity to tell their own story through literature. Black British writing is an example of this kind of media that is transmitting the experience of the black diaspora. With the empowerment that the act of remembering provides, the peoples whose stories are unacknowledged in history have a chance to preserve their memory and transmit it to next generations and to disclose the other side of history.

Memory is a closely related and an active force in the formation of diasporic identity. Just as memory is constituted by movement, as Avtar Brah contends, "at the heart of the notion of diaspora is the image of the journey" (182). In a similar vein, Baronian et al. state that "memory – understood as the complex relation of personal experiences, the shared histories of communities and their modes of transmission – must be seen as a privileged carrier of diasporic identity" (11-12). The crossing of

borders transforms cultural formations in line with the newly generated cultural frameworks. Memory creates continuity among them over time although most of the members of diaspora have not experienced the cultural practices of the community in the departed land. Thus, memory, transcending territorial and cultural borders through the dispersal of the community and destabilizing the notion of homeland, constructs the diasporic identity. This relationship between diasporic experience and memory will be discussed in line with Paul Gilroy's concept of the black Atlantic and form the theoretical framework for the analysis of Phillips's fiction.

2.2. Paul Gilroy's Concept of The Black Atlantic

In his seminal study *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double-Consciousness*,[17] Paul Gilroy explores the cultural politics of race and nation to delineate the relation between slavery and the historical development of modernity. Disclosing the complicity of modernity in slavery, he challenges the idea that modernity belongs specifically to the West while the history of slavery concerns black populations alone. To this end, he underlines the agency of black political and cultural formations that both employ and contest the conceptions of modernity such as progress and reason. Modernity is built on what it considers and excludes as premodern; modernity creates a contested terrain because it actually includes what appears as its opposite. Against the fixed, stable, and exclusionary boundaries of modernity, Gilroy counterposes the black diaspora experience that is fluid, unfinished, and everchanging. He undermines the racialized construction of culture and complicates the binaries in the conceptualization of national identity by claiming that "there is a culture that is not specifically African, American, Caribbean, or British, but all of these at once; a *black Atlantic* culture whose themes and techniques transcend ethnicity and nationality to produce something new and, until now, unremarked" (2). He offers the black Atlantic

[17] It has opened up new perspectives across various disciplines in humanities and social sciences. In view of the reception of the study since its publication, Lucy Evans states that "Gilroy's book has indeed inspired contentious discussion on the subjects of nationalism, transnationalism, racial identity and the relationship between culture and politics, among other things" (257).

as a political utopia that demonstrates the transcendence of delimiting understandings of nation, ethnicity, and race. In so doing, he demands a reconsideration of the binary between tradition and modernity that attributes rationality, reason and progress to the West and excludes diasporic Africans as the other. Gilroy claims that the slave past must be viewed as "a legitimate part of the moral history of the West" (70). Western modernity is actually built upon its complex historical relations, economic exploitation of slaves, and racial oppression; therefore, it must be extended to include what it considers premodern, thereby revealing its inherent heterogeneity. In view of this, what it excludes no longer remains outside its boundaries but contributes to its reconstruction. As such, national and cultural identities can no longer be considered stable but are reconstituted through the movement of black peoples across borders throughout history. Rejecting the associations of race, culture, and nation, Gilroy, instead, draws attention to the historical and political processes that racialize identities. To this end, he emphasizes the role of black agency and its political and cultural movements in the development of modernity by revising the understanding of progress, culture, and nation.

Gilroy proposes the Atlantic as "a single, complex unit of analysis" that defies "nationalist and ethnically absolute approaches" and shifts the focus onto "an explicitly transnational and intercultural perspective" regarding the African diaspora (15). For Gilroy, the black Atlantic provides an area of "an infinite process of identity construction" (223) and "transnational black Atlantic creativity" (16). His emphasis on transnational experience resists all essentialist and nationalist categories in defining cultural identity. With the experience of slavery, the identity and culture of the enslaved people were stripped from them and their cultures and memories were undermined by the colonizing cultures. But, at the same time, the experience of slavery and the "the structures of feeling, producing, communicating and remembering" (3) brought about transnational formation; it led to a communicative relationship that created a common past and reconstructed diaspora identity.

The contribution of the black cultural experience to western modernity had also been conceptualized a century earlier by W.E.B. Du Bois. He coined the term "double consciousness," which refers to the

> sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his twoness-an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder. (45)

Drawing on this idea, Gilroy claims that the black populations in the West "stand between (at least) two great cultural assemblages" because striving "to be both European and black requires some specific forms of double consciousness" (1). He refers to the experience of slavery as the foundation for the African diaspora and focuses on the reconciliation of being both European and black by putting this "inescapable hybridity and intermixture of ideas" (3) against racism, ethnic and cultural absolutism in his concept. Thus, he foregrounds how "movement, relocation, displacement, and restlessness" that constitute the black Atlantic history reinforce modernity but at the same time they are excluded from it. In view of this duality, he rejects the idea of the connectedness of race and nation and, instead, claims that the constituent parts of identity are to be found in the routes that black people take across borders and boundaries.

The term diaspora refers to "the establishment of reconfigured transnational communities" as a consequence of the dispersion of a group of people with a shared experience of "forced dispersal, immigration, displacement (Agnew 19)[18]. Gilroy uses the term diaspora to define "a transnational and intercultural multiplicity" (*The Black Atlantic* 195) and a "new structure of cultural exchange" in the twentieth century that was "built up across the imperial networks which once played host to the triangular trade of sugar, slaves and capital" (*There Ain't* 157). Diaspora identity is constructed through "movement and mediation" to overcome the idea of "roots and rootedness" (*The Black Atlantic*19). Therefore, diaspora, as he puts it, "should be cherished for its

[18] The traditional uses of the term describing Jewish dispersion have expanded to define ethnic, migrant, exile and overseas communities. The diaspora, as Christine Chivallon explains, "is no longer seen as unitary; instead, its sociality is seen as based on movement, interconnection, and mixed references" (359). In a similar vein, as James Procter defines it, "diaspora' can appear both as naming a *geographical* phenomenon – the traversal of physical terrain by an individual or a group – as well as a *theoretical* concept: a way of thinking, or of representing the world" ("Diaspora" 151). In this sense, being a member of diaspora does not necessarily mean belonging to a minority group; one can think or represent themselves as such.

ability to pose the relationship between ethnic sameness and differentiation: a changing same" (xi). In this sense, the culture of the black Atlantic goes beyond ethnicity and nationality to produce something new. Within diaspora, with the alternative accounts of memory, a "half-remembered micropolitics" is created (16). It is half-remembered because it is constituted by various members of different populations who share similar experiences. That is to say, memory is constitutive of new identities and a "compound culture from disparate sources" (15). Through narratives of memory, the past is reclaimed by diaspora, hence new identifications can be constructed on common experiences such as displacement, oppression, and migration. As such, diaspora does not entail an exile position which is nostalgic in a desire to return home. It is not a racially constructed identity either; rather, Gilroy promotes a hybrid, fluid identity in his concept. He explains the dynamism of diaspora culture as follows:

> what was initially felt to be a curse - the curse of homelessness or the curse of enforced exile- gets repossessed. It becomes affirmed and is reconstructed as the basis of a privileged standpoint … It also represents a response to the successive displacements, migrations, and journeys (forced and otherwise) which have come to constitute these black cultures' special conditions of existence. (111)

Therefore, transcending national frameworks, it creates a counter culture through the transcultural process of hybridisation and identity formation. Gilroy claims that it is the routes rather than the roots that shape these subjectivities. To explain the fluidity and multiplicity of black cultural identity and its relevance to the Middle Passage, he uses ship imagery:

> I have settled on the image of ships in motion across the spaces between Europe, America, Africa, and the Caribbean as a central organising symbol for this enterprise and as my starting point. The image of the ship - a living, micro-cultural, micro-political system in motion - is especially important for historical and theoretical reasons. (4)

The ship, a vehicle of exchange, is a transnational production that can be viewed as a site of memory. It is an image of modernity that Gilroy sets against the modern nation-states. In this "system in motion" his suggestion of "routes" rather than "roots" is fundamental to an understanding of black identity and modernity, against which he counterposes the hegemony of Western modernity that favours container cultures.

Bringing along various accounts of the past, black peoples cross the territorial borders "not only as commodities but engaged in various struggles toward emancipation, autonomy, and citizenship," which makes the history of the black Atlantic "a means to reexamine the problems of nationality, location, identity, and historical memory" (16). In this respect, the black Atlantic should not only be considered in relation to slavery. As the image of the ship in motion illustrates, the routes take the people on a continual journey by both stripping them of their identities and form new subjectivities that bind various cultures in a transcultural identity. As opposed to the essentialist understanding of a single black diaspora and models of racial solidarity, he conceptualizes a transcultural concept of identity. Gilroy is highly critical of the homogenizing ideas and practices which imagine a genuine African identity in diaspora since these ideas lead to "ethnic absolutism" (*The Black Atlantic* 2). In contrast to the alleged homogeneity of racial categories, in the black Atlantic concept blackness is a cultural identity that is socially constructed for it has been constituted by historical circumstances and various cultural influences.

In Gilroy's conceptualization of black cultural identity, identities are shaped by a dynamic process which does not leave out the role of the roots. However, it is the porous borders between different cultures and the diversity stemming from this interaction that open up new routes and enable the reconstruction of identity. The routes complicate the notion of a fixed narrative of diaspora as it refers to an experience always in a process that cannot be represented in a unitary, linear narrative. As in diasporic experience, migration and the impossibility of returning to the homeland are the conditions of memory (Creet 10). In relation to this Rosinska states that a recollection of a moment in the past "is never the same but rather changes its meaning depending on the horizon of other experiences that surround it" (Rosinska 39). In this sense, memory might give a sense of a return to the lost reality, an image to reconstruct. Yet, it is the new routes that shape the understanding of the roots and the past. As such, the notion of home does not refer to a fixed place anymore because the individual redefines home in the changing conditions of the present. To be more precise, homeland becomes a dynamic world which is remembered in fragments. It is fragmentation and plurality that define the diasporic experience. Likewise, the new

environment of the diaspora is not a new fixed space either; as the experiences and baggage of the past fluctuate within time, the perception of the routes also changes.

Since the black Atlantic experience refers to a triangular structure of transcultural connection between African American, Caribbean and British culture at once, it engages with the idea of hybridity, plurality, fluidity of cultural identity, which is in line with the non-essentialist outlook of transcultural memory. Thus, transcultural memory can be considered alongside Gilroy's problematization of the notion of nation as a racial category. The focus on transcultural relations that are formed by the conditions of diaspora in his concept allows for reading of the black Atlantic experience in terms of the studies on the mobility of memory. Accordingly, this dissertation will refer to the black Atlantic concept alongside the concept of transcultural memory because just as Gilroy foregrounds the role of routes in identity construction, transcultural memory considers mobility as the condition of the formation of memory.

Both the black Atlantic concept and ideas of transculturality can be taken as a critique of essentialist perceptions of identity and nation. In a similar vein, these theoretical frameworks defy ideas of container cultures in favour of a fluid notion of cultural identity. The black Atlantic celebrates "a fluid and dynamic cultural system that escapes the grasp of nation-states and national conceptions of political and economic development" (Gilroy, *Small Acts* 71). The concept of transcultural memory shares the same perspective towards the essentialist understandings of nation and nation-states as confiners of memory. The experience of the Middle Passage, the struggle in the postcolonial period, and the movement between roots and routes all reveal a memory dimension that informs the representation of diverse events beyond borders. In view of the conceptualizations of national identities with the emergence of new global challenges after World War II and the Cold War, Gilroy describes British nationalism and the expected challenges that are to be faced as follows:

> Any worthwhile explanation for Britain's postmodern nationalism … must … be able to acknowledge that exceptionally powerful feelings of comfort and compensation are produced by the prospect of even a partial restoration of the country's long-vanished homogeneity. Repairing that aching loss is usually signified by the recovery or preservation of endangered whiteness—and the exhilarating triumph over chaos and strangeness which that victory entails. If

> this partial explanation is to become valid, it will have to account for how Britain's nationalism has interfaced with its racism and xenophobia. (*After* 95)

His critique of the discourses of cultural essentialism applies not only to Eurocentric racism and nationalism but also to discourses such as Negritude and Pan-Africanism[19] as they still imagine Africa as a mystical homeland frozen in time, which contributes to the alleged division between the West and Africa. Instead, he offers a diasporic tradition of the black people, which cannot be seen separate from Western history and modernity. And to keep diaspora from being an object of idealisation he thinks its symbolic nature must be preserved:

> it points emphatically to the fact that there can be no pure, uncontaminated or essential blackness anchored in an unsullied originary moment. It suggests that a myth of shared origins is neither a talisman which can suspend political antagonisms nor a deity invoked to cement a pastoral view of black life that can answer the multiple pathologies of contemporary racism. (*Small Acts* 99)

Also, Gilroy's concept of conviviality, a process of cross-cultural communication in the lives of contemporary diaspora, favours a "renewed and much more direct confrontation with the issues of racial hierarchy and cultural diversity" (*After Empire* 18). His efforts to challenge models of absolutist identifications follow parallel lines with transcultural conceptions which promote hybrid cultures, which are associated with formations of cultural identities in constant flux. The modes of remembering across cultures, as Erll explains, allow us to see

> firstly, the many fuzzy edges of national cultures of remembrance, the many shared sites of memory that have emerged through travel, trade, colonialism and other forms of cultural exchange; secondly, the great internal heterogeneity of national culture, its different classes, generations, ethnicities, religious communities, and subcultures … and, thirdly, the relevance that formations beyond national culture have for memory, such as … football, music culture, and consumer culture. (*Memory* 65)

In a similar vein, Gilroy defines the "political and cultural formation" of the black Atlantic as stemming from a "desire to transcend both the structures of the nation state and the constraints of ethnicity and national particularity" (*The Black Atlantic* 19).

[19] These Afrocentric discourses, which contest the white civilized other, are established on the notions of racial authenticity, thereby essentializing identity, as well. Gilroy rejects such versions of racial solidarity as they are also products of colonialism.

Thus, it can be said that transcultural memory also highlights the routes rather than the roots that reveal the dynamic nature and embeddedness of memory in movement. As Gilroy explores the contact points and interconnected cultural forms, which are the constituents of the black Atlantic, transcultural memory traces the migratory trajectories. These theories meet on the common ground that nation-states have lost their validity in the sense that the boundaries dividing racial, national, cultural categories have become blurred and identities can no longer be seen as fixed, stable, homogeneous entities. They apply to migrant experience that transforms consciousness and identities as "in an increasingly interconnected world, cultures are increasingly intertwined and people often constitute their cultural identities by drawing on more than one culture" (Schulze-Engler xii). In view of this, seeing memory from transcultural lenses, combined with Gilroy's emphasis on the entanglements of an interaction among different cultures, lends itself well as a theoretical framework to analyse Caryl Phillips's works. The bridge between black British cultural history and transcultural memory perspectives yield insight into this study's exploration of how Phillips reconfigures traditional notions of Britishness in his works.

2.3. Contextualizing Phillips's Approach to Memory against the Background of Black Cultural Politics in Britain

Phillips is one of the writers who have made a significant contribution to the cultural life in Britain by challenging its "whitewashed" understanding of British history through literary works. In order to understand the circumstances that lead Phillips to reimagine the past to perceive the forces that have shaped the present, it is helpful to briefly consider black cultural politics in Britain. British nationalist discourse, which is informed by the British imperial legacy of the late 16th and early 18th centuries, is based on its appropriation of non-British peoples and regions to code Britishness on the basis of a white ethnic identity. Throughout the colonial period, the exclusionary idea of Britishness was reinforced, but during the decolonization crisis of the post-World War II era, Britain both struggled to hold on to its image as a global

power, and had to come to terms with its own image as a diminishing world power in need of the labour power of people from its (former) colonies.

The transcultural memory of Britain refers to the interconnected memory situated in, what Said has termed, "overlapping territories, intertwined histories" (*Culture* 72). As a significant element that has brought about this shared past, immigration is one of the foundational parts of multicultural British society. The presence of people of African origin in Britain dates back to the times when Britain was under Roman invasion. But it was the transatlantic slave trade that led to the mass immigration of black populations to Britain. With the abolishment of slavery in 1833, many former slaves were taken to Britain as servants. However, it was the immigration flow from the Commonwealth that attracted large numbers of people from former colonies to seek a new life in Britain. The immigrants from the Caribbean, the so called-Windrush generation, named after the ship Empire Windrush, which became iconic in British memory, arrived in Tilbury on 22 June 1948.[20] Their arrival was in fact

> facilitated by the Nationality Act (1948), a piece of legislation partly motivated by Indian Independence in 1947. Here, 1948 cannot be reduced to the year in which a single boat docked at Tilbury, but needs to be understood within the context of that broader political act, which led directly to Britain's borders being opened to its colonies and former colonies for the first time. (Procter, *Dwelling* 3)

However, the immigrants were not welcomed by the people of the host country. They had to face a range of discriminatory attitudes and practices that created a deeply unequal society. They came with high expectations and a sense of cultural identification because their education, religion, language, the names of the places where they lived were all somehow related to Britain. As Kathleen Paul states, "the populations of the West Indian isles had been encouraged to think of Britain as home, as the cultural and political center of 'their' empire" (114). In a similar vein, Dabydeen and Wilson-Tagoe point out "the Empire was coming 'home,' claiming their rights of

[20] Most of the research on black British writing focuses on the post-war migrant experience as a framework for the construction of black British identity and its reflection in literature. See James Procter's *Dwelling Places: Postwar Black British Writing* (2003), Mark Stein's *Black British Literature: Novels of Transformation* (2004), David Ellis's *Writing Home: Black British Writing in Britain Since the War* (2007).

abode as British citizens holding British passports" (79). They were disillusioned because the mother country quickly rejected them as non-British and saw their presence as threatening. The immigrants were recruited into low-paid jobs the white people would not want to have. They were also disadvantaged in social life because of the racial prejudice and discrimination against black people. As Dabydeen and Wilson-Tagoe assert,

> [a]lthough in this period of emigration, several hundred thousand white non-British people were accepted for settlement in Britain (Poles, Eastern Europeans, Ukranians and other nationalities displaced by the Second World War, for instance), popular and official hostility has been directed overwhelmingly against the black immigrants…The National Front and other extreme and violent right-winged organisations won sizeable support in local and national elections. The mainstream parties – Labour and Conservative - passed Acts of Parliament designed to restrict and they terminate the flow of black Commonwealth immigration. A Nationality Act was passed which redefined the concept of 'nationality' so as to further limit the black presence in Britain. (79)

In relation to the prejudice of the white population towards black people, Peter Fryer states that "[t]hey saw them as heathens who practised head-hunting, cannibalism, infanticide, polygamy, and 'black magic … as uncivilized, backward people, inherently inferior to Europeans … ignorant and illiterate, speaking strange languages, and lacking proper education" (374). Moreover, black people were seen as intruders and subjected to violence especially in 1958, when the anti-black riots broke out. The politicians and legislators were not willing to act for the black and hence "racism was institutionalized, legitimized, and nationalized" (Fryer 381). By doing so, also, Britain attempted, in Robin Cohen's words, "to bolster the myth of a racially exclusive [white] British identity" (18). However, people of African origin had long been in Britain. Arguing against the exclusionary notions of Britishness, Caryl Phillips emphasizes the importance of historical awareness:

> Indeed, as time goes by, I'm becoming more and more interested in nationality, not in order to fit in, not out of a sense of wanting to give an answer to the young school friend who might say 'Go back to where you come from.' … These days I find myself reading books about Roman history in Britain and about Tudor history in Britain, because … they concern those moments at which Britain changed radically because of migration, and they debunk the mythology that Britain has only recently had to deal with migrations which changed the nature of society. ("Other" 83)

He historicizes the presence of black diaspora in his works to uncover the relevance of the past to the current problems. Phillips grew up witnessing that "to be black and British is to be unnamed in official discourse. The construction of a national British identity is built upon a notion of a racial belonging, upon a hegemonic white ethnicity that never speaks its presence" (Mirza 3). The notion of the nation as a racial category and national amnesia, which ignores the atrocities in the past, led to the assumption of the validity of a racially homogeneous national past. It is this inadequate representation of Britain that Phillips seeks to destabilize in his works.

Shaped by the imperial legacy, British nationalist discourse assumes the validity of a racially homogeneous image of Britain. It denies the history of the black diaspora and promotes racially homogeneous national identities by "specify[ing] how – and when – people identify themselves, perceive others, experience the world and interpret their predicaments in … national rather than other terms" (Brubaker 175). As Phillips demonstrates in his novels "[a]cross the centuries British identity has been primarily a racially constructed concept" ("The Pioneers" 270). As a part of this exclusive image of Britishness, "[t]he nineteenth-century imagined community of Empire did much to … legitimize British racism" and "it entrenched the very ideas of Britishness." ("The Pioneers" 268). In accordance with some specific "rules of membership," Britishness was defined and fixed (268). The black citizens remained outside the discourses of nation and belonging as a figure of no past or future. As Bhabha explores in "DissemiNation: Time, Narrative and the Margins of the Modern Nation," any nation is inherently heterogenous because the "production of the nation as narration" is constituted by the two forces: "the continuist, accumulative temporality of the pedagogical" and the "repetitious, recursive strategy of the performative" (145). For Bhabha, the pedagogical is a part of history and moves in a linear movement through time, while the performative is non-continuous and constantly repeated to reproduce the national values. He calls this duality "double-writing or dissemination" (148). This split that reveals the counter narratives in the formation of nation counterposes the claim of the notion of national purity. Particularly, during the post-war years, when Britain gradually lost its power in the global arena, there emerged an anxiety about Britishness and the values constituting

its image. The nationalist discourse, thus, began to reveal its cracks and contradictions. Phillips's efforts to reveal the persistence of the past in the present through the memory of the Middle Passage and the black diaspora also lay bare such competing versions of the past in the myth of national purity.

The homogeneous white image of Britishness is established upon a nationalized collective memory. It is informed by the choice of authorities, or institutions, which select glorious moments to commemorate in the construction of the nation. On the other hand, immigration reminds the British nation of its transcultural links and shared history with black populations; therefore, the nationalist discourse denies this inherent heterogeneity of nation. When excluding "the others" from such a concept of nation, however, the nationalist discourse also excludes and removes some parts of the national memory that involve the atrocities of the colonial conduct and the contribution of slavery to Britain's economy. Gilroy, in his *After Empire*, contends that the imperial history is "a source of discomfort, shame, and perplexity" and as a consequence "its complexities and ambiguities were readily set aside" (98). Particularly, with the "loss of imperial prestige" after World War II, cultural, racial and ethnic diversity became "a dangerous feature of society" that was thought to bring "only weakness, chaos, and confusion" (98). Aligning the painful past with the arrival of immigrant communities, British society considered them a threat to its image of Britishness. Salman Rushdie shares similar concerns in *Imaginary Homelands* (1991). He states that "this stain [of imperial legacy] has seeped into every part of the culture, the language and the daily life, and nothing much has ever been done to wash it out" (130). Race and ethnicity remained as distinguishing markers of national belonging, thereby rendering blackness and Britishness mutually exclusive identity categories in the shared memory of the nation.

The primacy of whiteness in the imagination of Britishness is targeted by the black writers to deconstruct and set a more inclusive notion of the nation. Principally, "black" refers to a political and cultural identity; it is an expression of a "shared space of marginalization" and the "shared experience of racialization and its consequences" (Mirza 3). Stuart Hall notes that the term black was coined "as a way of referencing the common experience of racism and marginalisation in Britain" ("New" 258).

However, it also refers to diverse groups, overlapping identifications, multiple connections, hence it cannot be considered homogenous. Thus, although the term has been used as a politically constructed category to label alliance, the diversity it refers to is in the foreground. Similarly, black British writing is informed by a multitude of influences and diverse range of factors that cannot be defined by a specific genre or narrative. It primarily refers to the literary tradition which gives voice to the experience of black subjectivities and investigates the marginalization, lack of representation, and discrimination of the black people. In Dabydeen and Wilson-Tagoe's words, black British literature refers to the works "created and published in Britain, largely for a British audience, by black writers either born in Britain or who have spent a major portion of their lives in Britain" (10). Focusing usually on postcolonial concerns, black British literature has made an important contribution to the debates around issues such as immigration, hybridity, and nation as a counter discourse to essentialist understanding of identity and prevalent racism. Black British writers mostly portray a sense of displacement and the experience of living in a hostile society. They give voice to the marginalized populations to explore the voices and events that may have been left out of the written histories as well as to revise the received notions of the British nation and culture in a more expansive way.

The adjective, black, offers a political standpoint to challenge racism within British society. Removed from their countries of origin, the immigrants were exposed to the othering attitude of the society, but it led them to develop a black cultural identity through which they identified themselves with neither their homeland they departed from nor with Britishness. As Alison Donnell states, "as an identificatory category black never really has fitted neatly into national boundaries" (11). It is what Britishness excludes that unites black people to struggle against the discrimination. In view of this, Kobena Mercer points out that

> [w]hen various peoples - of Asian, African, and Caribbean descent - interpellated themselves and each other as /black/ they invoked a collective identity predicated on political and not biological similarities. In other words, the naturalized connotations of the term /black/ were disarticulated out of the dominant codes of racial discourse and rearticulated as signs of alliance and solidarity among dispersed groups of people sharing common historical experiences of British racism. (291)

During the 1950s and 1960s, reconstructive movements informed by a sense of unbelonging helped the black find a voice. Organisations were founded to form solidarity among black communities. In the 1970s, especially the children of the first settlers demonstrated against the cultural politics of Britain and began to react against the oppression via organizations like the Black People´s Alliance (BPA). The shared sense of disempowerment of the second-generation, who were born and raised in Britain, was articulated in riots they started to demand recognition and equality. The second-generation black British people faced "a growing politics of racial intolerance expressed at an official, institutional level" (Procter, *Dwelling* 95). In the 1980s, black communities continued to protest against racism and new experiences began to define diaspora identity. During the late 1980s and early 1990s, the generalizing nature of the term black was destabilized by the discourses of feminist, queer, and South Asian groups. As the term black gained wider political meanings, Afrocentric views were problematized. The questioning of the stable conceptions of identity based on race and ethnicity generated the dissolution of such notions.

Stuart Hall explores the changing nature of black cultural politics in Britain and the transformation of the term "black" in his canonical essay "New Ethnicities" (1989). Defining its two phases, he mentions a significant shift in black cultural politics that helped the dissolving of essentialist concepts and led to the construction of new ethnicities. Although these "phases" are both "rooted in the politics of anti-racism and the post-war black experience in Britain" (224) and they "constantly overlap and interweave" (224), there is a remarkable distinction between the two. The first phase, or moment, is characterized by "the struggle to come into representation" (224). Being black is identified with the common experience among black communities that unite them and forge resistance; therefore, the first phase is marked by "the critique of the way blacks were positioned as the unspoken and invisible 'other' of predominantly white aesthetic and cultural discourses" (224). Hall emphasizes the "oneness" of the black diaspora that must be discovered "in the re-telling of the past" (224). As such, he also connects identity with memory by defining cultural identity as "a sort of collective 'one true self'" (223). In the first moment, then, blackness is a politically useful category in the process of identity formation. To Hall,

it is culture and identity that define any sense of belonging in a community. Thus, even if racial identity is a construct, it is necessary for representation because in the construction of a collective identity, the recollection of the past is essential. However, the second phase marks a shift to "a politics of representation," (224). In this phase, stereotypical images of blackness are contested by debates around identity that point towards acknowledging differences within black populations. Rather than "the essential black subject," identities that are constantly transforming are in the foreground in the second phase (224). Race is not a mere determiner of identity; other social categories such as gender and class are involved in its construction. Thus, black cultural identity is producing and reproducing itself anew.

In her "Nation and Contestation", Alison Donnell refers to the "change" in black cultural politics, as well (11). As she argues, in the period between the 1950s and mid-1970s, which is the first phase of black cultural politics, the notion of black experience as a unifying element was essential to invoke solidarity against racism because "black was an identity at odds with, or at best, in negotiation with Britishness" (11). Then, in the mid-seventies the sense of "being black in Britain" began to be replaced by the sense of "being black British" (11). It was a time when the second-generation black people claimed for national identity. The plurality of identities and new formations enabled the questioning of the notion of Britishness which is constructed upon racial categories. In the 1990s, "blackness" was not just a social and political reality anymore. It became "a discursive" device that helped deconstruct the "traditional" divisions. (Sommer 241). As such, black has become an identity to challenge and transform the dominant representations of Britishness as white and from an Anglo-Saxon origin. The shift from the notion of black as a unified imagined community towards new ethnicities refers to an understanding of black as "an identity alongside a range of differences" (Hall, *The Question* 309). Therefore, as Hall puts it, "diaspora experience is defined, not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of 'identity' which lives with and through, not despite, difference; by *hybridity*" ("Cultural" 235). In view of this, there is no one true essence that can define cultural identity. It is constructed and reconstructed in accordance with multiple historical and cultural experiences.

Black British writing foregrounds this hybridity and plurality of black cultural identity. Its focus on postcolonialism, migration, diverse cultural encounters, and the emergence of fluid identities is also parallel to the concerns of transcultural memory that reveals the inherent heterogeneity of societies. Thus, memory plays an important role in their works. In a society in which the dominant discourse takes "white" to be the normal/default term against which other identities are labelled, the first-generation black British writers wrote about being black in a white society. The works of the first-generation migrant writers, who belong to the Windrush generation such as Beryl Gilroy, George Lamming, Edward Kamau Brathwaite, Samuel Selvon, Wilson Harris, and V.S. Naipaul, are marked by a disillusionment of arriving in the mother country. The Windrush generation became a symbol of collective memory and consciousness in the writing of these writers who deal with displacement, disillusionment and difficulties of living in a hostile society. However, the second-generation writers claim the identity of Britishness and introduce diverse representations of it. The second generation refers to those who were born or raised in Britain, whose relationship with the nation differs from that of the post-war migrants. This tension of being black and British has been a remarkable part of their works. The second-generation writers, such as Caryl Phillips, Fred D'Aguiar, Zadie Smith, Bernardine Evaristo, and Diran Adebayo, focus on the sense of belonging to neither Britain nor their ancestral roots. As demonstrated by many examples of black British writing, the first-generation writers deal with problems of social marginalization in a new and hostile society as exemplified in Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners* (1956) and Joan Riley's *The Unbelonging* (1985), while the texts by the second-generation writers largely deal with transcultural connections and re-evaluation of the notion of Britishness. In their works, the focus shifts to redefinitions of national culture with the globalisation and newly formed connections, and intersections among various routes of the black diaspora. In relation to this transformation, Gilroy contends that "extraordinary new forms have been produced and much of their power resides in their capacity to circulate a new sense of what it means to be British" (*Small Acts* 61–2). While the first generation struggles with racial prejudice, alienation, and nostalgia for home, the only home the

second generation ever know of is Britain. Thus, having also experienced the racial riots in the 70s and 80s, they are more likely to fight for recognition and representation.

As a second-generation black British writer, Phillips acknowledges that "we, the second generation, had to change British society with our intransigence, or what the police force called our 'attitude', because British society was certainly not going to change of its own volition." ("The Pioneers" 276). The dilemma of the second generation, who can neither fully fit in the host country nor feel an attachment to the homeland their parents immigrated from, can be observed in his works. He depicts the uneasy position of being both black and British in a country that is being reconstructed in the post-war period with the help of immigrant labour: "I recognise the place, I feel at home here, but I don't belong. I am of, and not of, this place" (*New* 4). However, his travels and multiple affiliations with the Atlantic triangle have earned him the impetus both to uncover the historical connections and to expose the persistence of racism in contemporary Britain. The fluidity and creativity of diaspora identifications conceptualized by Gilroy and Hall find expression in Phillips's works. He believes that "healthy societies are ones which allow such pluralities to exist and do not feel threatened by … hybrid conjoinings" ("Necessary" 131). The potentials of mobility and shifting identifications are much more promising than stability can offer. This celebration of intermingling of cultures is expressed in Phillips's work in more complex ways. He does not simply portray a happy, culturally diverse society; rather, he gives a realistic description of migrant experience and diaspora identity. He shares the sense of dislocation with the black diaspora and displays an awareness of the persistent racism and other predicament the immigrants face. Phillips explores the hybridity of racial identities and the multiplicity of the black Atlantic experience by creating characters and spaces that can be taken as a literary counterpart of Gilroy's theory of the black Atlantic. Most of his works introduce the history of the Middle Passage and the underpinnings of colonial ideology in social relationships in Britain. As such, he uncovers the memory of the transcultural connections between Africa and Britain to complicate the received images of nation and the idea of rootedness of the black diaspora. The inherent heterogeneity of British society and national identity is laid bare through numerous incidents of entanglements of British and African cultures

and histories and their effects on contemporary British society. Phillips's works of fiction draw a fragmented, non-totalizing portrait of the black diaspora by bringing to the fore a transcultural memory dimension, forming parallelisms between the past and the present. In this way, his works contribute to the emergence of a narrative counter to essentialist and nationalist discourses.

CHAPTER 3

TRANSCULTURAL MEMORY OF THE BLACK ATLANTIC: *CROSSING THE RIVER*

Shortlisted for the Booker Prize in 1993 and awarded the James Tait Black Memorial Prize for Fiction in 1994, *Crossing the River*[21] (1993) is one of the most acclaimed and discussed novels by Phillips. The novel, spanning two hundred and fifty years of the African diaspora from the slave trade to the aftermath of World War II, opens with an African father lamenting his selling of his three children, Nash, Martha, and Travis, whose symbolic stories will take place in the rest of the novel, to a slave trader, Captain James Hamilton. From then on, the guilt-ridden father, who embodies Africa, is haunted by "the chorus of a common memory" (1). Framed by the voice of the African father, the novel consists of four parts that focus on the fractured stories of three siblings from various historical settings, the US, Africa, and England, the three territories of the black Atlantic, and the narrative of the Captain Hamilton on board a slave ship, each of which deals with displacement and loss. The question of memory is a crucial concern in the novel. Intertwining the memories of the members of the African diaspora with the ones of slave traders and slave owners, the novel brings into dialogue multiple points of view from different time spans. With the movement of memories across centuries and continents, the historical interrogation of the novel expands to deal with the history of the Middle Passage and World War II as a part of the memory of the British Empire. Through individual characters who are representatives of the descendants of slaves, in the novel, the memory of the black Atlantic travels across the globe starting from eighteenth-century Africa through America and to Britain until the end of World War II, and thereby setting the stage for

[21] Phillips takes the novel's title from the fifth part of E. K. Brathwaite's poetry "Masks", which is a part of his trilogy *The Arrivants* (1968). Although he does not acknowledge this in the novel, in his interview with Carol Margaret Davison, Phillips states: "That's probably where I got the original title because I first thought of this title 10 or 11 years ago" (95).

the following two novels to be analysed in this study, respectively focusing on the refugee flow and Windrush generation.

This chapter argues that *Crossing the River*, through its fragmented structure and polyphonic narrative which mirrors the movement of the black diaspora across the Atlantic, illustrates the ways the memory of the black Atlantic transcends the cultural and national borders. The diversity of representations of black subjectivity in the novel can be considered as a response to the essentialist approaches to identity that are based on the notion of identity, culture, and nation as homogeneous and fixed categories. As such, the novel disrupts prescribed ideas on diaspora identity. Furthermore, the novel introduces white people who are involved in the experience of the black Atlantic. In so doing, it counters the notion that the legacy of slavery concerns only black people. As its dialogue with the past entails, the novel investigates the entangled memory of the black Atlantic and undermines the totalizing accounts of black Atlantic history. This chapter will focus on the ways the novel mirrors the shared memories of the black Atlantic experience to illustrate the transcultural connections, and hence draw attention to how the novel contests essentialist and insular approaches to identity.

Crossing the River charts the possible origins of the history of the present black diaspora. It portrays how diaspora identity is constructed upon the memory of slavery and new routes of diverse encounters and cultural exchange among the black Atlantic territories. As Gilroy claims, the black Atlantic territories embody a contact zone of interweaving memories (*The Black Atlantic* 6). In this contact zone "disparate cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other" (Pratt 4) creating a transcultural entanglement. The novel lays bare this interweaving of black Atlantic memories in various times as it spreads through centuries. Memories, according to Erll, "do not hold still—on the contrary, they seem to be constituted first of all through movement" ("Travelling" 11). Mobility of memories across continents generate networks of remembrance that bring diverse cultures together and illustrate the fundamental connection among the black Atlantic territories. In view of this, temporal and spatial fractures in the novel reveal the transcultural quality of diaspora experience that cannot be contained within a single narrative. Thus, Phillips employs a fragmented structure that lays bare how the transcultural movement of memory contests essentialist

understandings of identity. Transcending not only national and cultural borders across centuries but also the constructed categories of identity, the novel locates the African diaspora within a broad framework through time and space, and offers ways of considering overlapping histories and cultures. By dealing with the memory of slavery, it foregrounds the absent voices from the traditional historical accounts of the colonial past and allows a reconsideration of the past across cross-cultural encounters and entanglements. As such, the novel retraces the routes of the African diaspora and transforms received images from the past to suggest that there is no essential black identity.

Coincidentally, the novel was published in the same year with Gilroy's *The Black Atlantic* and it has been studied by many scholars since then in the light of the black Atlantic concept (Bonnici 2005; Ward 2007; Bellamy 2014). *Crossing the River* consists of four sections, apart from the prologue and epilogue narrated by the African father. The narrative fragments of the novel complement each other representing the cartography of the black Atlantic in different historical periods. The movement of the characters across the Atlantic traces the connections between "roots and routes" (Gilroy, *The Black* 133) and leads to the formation of diasporic identities in the novel. Each section of the novel is set in a representative space of the triangular trade. While "The Pagan Coast" takes place in Africa, "West" is set in the United States. The title of the section "Somewhere in England" also refers to the setting in that part of the novel, and the last chapter "Crossing the River" is set on a ship sailing across the Atlantic. Furthermore, the novel is evocative of the kind of narratives Gilroy mentions in his conceptualization of the black Atlantic. To Gilroy, "the narratives of loss, exile, and journeying" have a "mnemonic function" that direct

> the consciousness of the group back to significant, nodal points in its common history and its social memory. The telling and retelling of these stories plays a special role, organising the consciousness of the "racial" group socially and striking the important balance between inside and outside activity - the different practices, cognitive, habitual, and performative, that are required to invent, maintain, and renew identity. (*The Black Atlantic* 198)

Thus, the novel exemplifies these practices that construct the identity of the African diaspora as the experience of each character symbolically shapes the diasporic

generations. In line with Gilroy's proposal of the Atlantic as a concept of "an explicitly transnational and intercultural perspective" (15), the novel offers an expansive illustration of memory travelling across national and cultural borders.

Crossing the River has attracted some contrasting critical responses since its publication. It has received critical praise for its representation of the African diaspora in various time spans and locations, which "offers a redemptive and affirmative history of survival" (Low 132). It is widely agreed that the novel deals with the complexity of colonialism and destabilizes the prescribed formulations of the black diaspora. According to Bénédicte Ledent, the novel is "a patchwork understanding of the historical process behind oppression" and Phillips "builds bridges to allow his readers to cross the river" offering "a different vantage point" to observe the past (*Caryl* 132; 112). Likewise, Abigail Ward thinks it is a challenging task to "resist conventional categorization along racial lines of black victim or white figure of blame" ("Outstretched" 21). In contrast to such views, some other scholars criticize Phillips, claiming that he introduces a mythical Africa in the novel. Among the major points that attract negative reactions to the novel are Phillips's giving voice to a slave trader, creating a former slave character who mimics colonial discourse, and narrating Travis's story from an Englishwoman's perspective. Most notably, Yogita Goyal claims that Phillips privileges the discourse of "the grand narrative of modern Western humanism" by providing "moral growth" and "agency" and more space to the white characters in the narrative, and denying the black characters an opportunity to resist them (20). In a similar vein, according to Timothy Bewes, Phillips "humanizes" those who are "implicated in the slave trade" and does not let the black characters express themselves (49).

However, one could contrarily argue that Phillips foregrounds the white characters in order to show their agency and responsibility in the history of slavery and at the same time to illustrate what they might have experienced in their interaction with Africa. To this end, the movement and criss-crossing of memory should be analysed. Phillips employs a mnemonic strategy that is coding the memory of the black Atlantic into the complex temporal structure of the narrative. He does not put the black characters in a position to enforce their version of the story, but, instead, he promotes

the chorus of the common memory that rises above the limitations and boundaries as extensively featured in the epilogue. As will be argued in this chapter, Phillips does not portray an unrealistic or utopian depiction of the past. Refusing all forms of nationalism, he avoids glorifying any discriminatory notion and dehumanizing the white characters. Furthermore, it is not a painful story of abandoned children. He acknowledges in an interview: "I wanted to make an affirmative connection, not a connection based upon exploitation or suffering or misery, but a connection based upon a kind of survival. This is an unusually optimistic book for me" ("Crisscrossing" 93). It is not a story of loss; it does not mediate the past to lament the suffering in the history of slavery. To be more precise, the novel does not create an alternative universe to counter the dominant narratives either; it rather attempts to revise the prescribed knowledge about the past by filling in the gaps, and thereby providing the voice of the sidelined characters that we do not encounter in official narratives of the national history. Memory emerges in the novel as a subversive force against the totalizing accounts of history. Therefore, unsettling the supposed roles and relationships assigned to the black subjectivity in history, the novel shows there is no essence to identity. To this end, Phillips confronts the reader with private and public selves of traders and slave owners while also exposing the truth about the victims who are subjected to abuse, torture, and death. Thus, he urges the reader to think about the gaps in history by interrogating its partiality. More significantly, the novel completes the gaps in the portrayal of the slave history with its roots and routes that are foregrounded through transcultural memory. This chapter will examine, from this perspective, how the travelling of memory helps discovering the relation between roots and routes of the African diaspora.

As Erll suggests, through the mobility of peoples across borders memory also travels "through time and space, across social, linguistic and political borders" ("Travelling" 11). This is also the case with the black Atlantic experience wherein the continual journey of both slaves and slave traders enables a transcultural engagement with the formation of memory. Phillips not only portrays dispersion and dislocation but also connects the moment of dispersal to the moment his characters enter the diasporic world. In an interview with Maya Jaggi, he explains the reason for his

reimagining the beginning of the dispersal: "If you don't know where you've come from, you don't know where you're going to…British people forget they know very little about history. Why? Because most of their history took place in India and Africa and the Caribbean, where they could pretend it didn't happen" ("Crossing" 26). Giving an unchronological account of this "sidelined" part of history of the West, which is entangled with the black Atlantic, Phillips explores the incomplete, unexpected, and ignored stories between geopolitical territories, cultures, and centuries in a fragmented narrative.

Such fragmentation displays the movement of the memory of the black Atlantic, that is, of the experience of slavery, broken familial relations, and an interrupted cultural heritage. The criss-crossing of the plotline, which coincides with the spaces of the black Atlantic, is in line with the workings of memory; as Kamali states, "the notion of 'memory' as a body of knowledge which is less 'organized' than 'history' is helpful for engaging a sense of 'memory' as inherently more truthful and more disruptive than 'history'" (160). Just as the notion of national homogeneity is problematic, the claims for official history's objectivity and the exclusion of the marginalized figures' voices are arbitrary and artificial. To represent the plurality of experiences, the fragmented sections of the novel are narrated by different narrators from various temporal and spatial zones. In the prologue, the African father's and captain Hamilton's thoughts are individualized typographically: "*Bought 2 strong man-boys, and a proud girl.* I soiled my hands with cold goods in exchange for their warm flesh. A shameful intercourse" (1). The lines in italics belong to Hamilton and reflect his business mindset while the father's lines show his despair and sorrow. The novel's first section, "The Pagan Coast," is about Nash Williams, an emancipated slave, who is now a missionary sent to Liberia by the American Colonization Society[22] in the 1830s, and his former master, Edward Williams. It is narrated by an extradiegetic narrator who focuses on Edward's journey to Liberia, which is occasionally interrupted by Nash's letters to him. The second part, "West," which is set in pre- and

[22] The Society for the Colonization of Free People of Color of America, known as the American Colonization Society (ACS), was founded in 1816 in order to promote a homogeneous white nation by sending black people to Africa, particularly Liberia, where ACS established a colony for black settlement.

post-civil war eras in America, is devoted to Martha Randolph who used to work on a plantation in Virginia and, now, as a frontierswoman, heads towards the west, away from the Missouri River. It starts with Martha's recalling the past in the form of a stream of consciousness that is blended with the voice of an extradiegetic narrator. The third section of the novel, "Crossing the River", turns back to 1752 to focus on Hamilton's logbook chronologically recording his journey to Africa and his two letters to his wife. And the last section "Somewhere in England" is set during World War II, focusing on the relationship between Travis, a black American GI stationed in the north of England, and Joyce, a white Englishwoman, whose journal entries reveal their story. The epilogue quotes some parts of the prologue and juxtaposes the memory of the father's selling his children with the current story of survival of the African diaspora thematically uniting all sections of the novel.

Through the movement of the siblings across the Atlantic, "a chorus of common memory," articulated by the African father, comes out and transcultural connections emerge. The history of slavery is shown to overlap with different stories in different historical moments, involving white people as well as the black diaspora throughout history. As Gilroy explains, the history of the Middle Passage is not only "somehow assigned to blacks," but also is a part of Western modernity since modernity is mostly built upon slavery (*The Black Atlantic* 49). As he further maintains, modernity encompasses what it seeks to exclude. Thus, "black" history is not only "our special property rather than a part of the ethical and intellectual heritage of the West" (49). In line with Gilroy's conception, to form an intertextual relation with the past, Phillips employs the log of a slave captain, which is a piece of narrative of the empire written from a colonialist perspective, letters of a slave owner, and the diary of a white Englishwoman alongside the story of the three African siblings and thereby emphasizes the inseparable historical connections. These intermingled relations reconfigure diaspora identity and link the chapters to one another and to the experience of the future generations which is reflected in the epilogue of the novel.

The epilogue, which has not received much critical response, is the part where the novel binds these seemingly disparate stories of scattered characters from different time spans and places through transcultural memory. The African father celebrates his

children's survival in spite of loss because once they cross the water, new routes provide new possibilities for them. Throughout the novel, the reworking of the roots goes beyond a mere narration of the former lives of the characters; by retracing the consequences of colonialism, the novel revives the lost moments in the past. As such, memory becomes a site of identity formulation as it is weaving new social and cultural ties across borders (Bond and Rapson 17). It suggests moving away from the concept of allegedly pure "single cultures" (Welsch, "On the Acquisition" 6) that is based on the idea of rootedness. In the novel, this transcultural vein of diaspora memory is emphasized by the African father's portrayal of the future. He hears "the many-tongued chorus of the common memory" (*CR* 235) once again and refers to the "survivors," (236) of the African diaspora, who spread its culture across the borders:

> In Brooklyn a helplessly addicted mother … A barefoot boy in São Paulo is rooted to his piece of the earth…In Santo Domingo, a child suffers the hateful hot comb, the dark half-moons of history heavy beneath each eye…I have listened. To reggae rhythms of rebellion and revolution dipping through the hills and valleys of the Caribbean… To the haunting voices. … To the saxophone player on a wintry night in Stockholm. … Samba. Calypso. Jazz. Jazz Sketches of Spain in Harlem. In a Parisian bookstore a voice murmurs the words. … I have listened to the voice that cried: I have a dream[23] that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave-owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood. I have listened to the sounds of an African carnival in Trinidad. In Rio. In New Orleans. On the far bank of the river, a drum continues to be beaten. (236-37)

The father's incomplete sentences and transcultural connections he refers to are evocative of Gilroy's pluralistic notion of culture, which is not inherited but socially constructed. In line with Gilroy's delineation of the relation of black diaspora to modern cultural forms to recover black agency, Phillips draws attention to the movement of black cultural productions across the globe. The cultural products of Africa such as music, dance, stories, rituals, operate within western cultural formations and even transform them. The diversity of black agency and its recovery through the intertwined cultures are mostly observed when the epilogue and prologue of the novel are juxtaposed; in the former we see a lamenting father suffering a guilty conscience,

[23] Phillips refers to Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I have a dream" speech connecting the African father's speech to an important figure in history. Just as King, the father dreams about a world free from discriminatory categories.

but in the latter his tone is celebratory because his descendants manage to survive. This can be seen as a transformative effect of the act of transcending the established borders that foster the notion of rootedness.

These fractured lives mirror the fractured memory of the survivors of the Middle Passage. Symbolically, cultural memory is produced and transmitted by the children of the African father. The emergence of culture in various locations of the world can be read in terms of Erll's idea that memory is not a static phenomenon; it "travels through dimensions of culture — the movement of people, but also of materials and media, of forms and practices, and of the contents they carry" (Erll "Travelling Memory in European Film" 6). More significantly, this entanglement of cultures depicts how transcultural memory transcends "political, ethnic, linguistic, or religious borders" of the collective memory of communities (Bond and Rapson 19). It is through the mobility of memory that boundaries are negotiated in various locations. And the new routes that diaspora take "bring into view heterogeneous memory cultures that were there all along but never entered into dominant understandings of the past" (Rothberg "The Witness" 358). As such, transcultural memory of the black Atlantic transgresses both the nation-states and the discourses of fixed origins. The African father seems to embody the rootedness of diaspora at first, but as the epilogue suggests, his voice echoes the unlimited routes of his descendants. The new routes refer to "displacement, tangled cultural experiences, structures and possibilities of an increasingly connected but not homogenous world" (Clifford 2). The experience of dislocation and the "shameful intercourse" (*CR* 1) link the diaspora's fate symbolically resonating not only the collective memory of Africa but also the transculturality of the memory because the black Atlantic experience involves the peoples across "water" who resist the enslavement of identities and express hope for the future. Rather than the unity of diaspora experience, its variety is emphasized since, as Ledent suggests, "[c]ross-culturality is not a mosaic of different, strictly delimited areas but an uninterrupted and always incomplete process of fusion" (Ledent, "Overlapping" 57). Therefore, the experience of African diaspora is not merely shaped by collective memory; it is transculturally shaped and constructed beyond the confines of a collectivity.

The novel takes the reader beyond allegedly "fixed" boundaries of race and illustrates the characters' diverse life experiences and encounters with the west. In the first section, Edward, an American slave master, sails to Liberia to find out about his former slave Nash, who is already dead. It is revealed later that Edward's letter to Nash "was uncovered by Edwards' wife Amelia, and not conveyed" (11) and she also "destroy[ed] the colored man's letter" (56) as well. Since Edward does not receive Nash's recent letters, he thinks Nash is missing or does not want to communicate with him anymore. This section, therefore, introduces Nash's voice interrupted by Edward's perspective to the events. Nash's story is interrupted and fractured just like the voice of the black people in the official historical records. Brought up as a Christian by his master, Nash's mission in Liberia is to form a Christian colony to cope with the black labour shortage after emancipation and to civilize the natives by converting them to Christianity. As such, the novel offers a fictional rendering of the ambivalences of cultural process and in-betweenness of black subjectivity. In Edward and Nash's story, such binarisms are unsettled on account of "the interactive and dialectical effects of the colonial encounter. … the dynamic of change is not all in one direction; it is in fact transcultural, with a significant circulation of effects back and forth between the two" (Ashcroft et al. 27). In his first days in Liberia Nash reproduces binaries mimicking the mindset of his master. In his *"Of Mimicry and, Man"* Bhabha defines mimicry as follows:

> [C]olonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a *subject of difference that is almost the same, but not quite*. Which is to say, that the discourse of mimicry is constructed around an *ambivalence;* in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference. (86)

Colonial discourse seeks to see a similar colonized subject, not an identical one so that it can still dominate the other. However, the slippage that occurs as a result of mimicry complicates the consequences of mimicry; mimicking undermines the superiority of the colonizer. As a colonized subject Nash both assumes the colonizer's perspective and "disrupts its authority" (88). At first, thinking that he is "fortunate enough to be born in a Christian country" (21), Nash is alien to the culture in Liberia; he is one of those children of Africa who becomes a son to a slave owner. As Bonicci contends,

> [t]he absence of Nash's (hi)story in his account characterizes the classical diaspora of modern slavery ranging from the mid-15th century to the late 19th century…Memory, built and cultured by the European slave master, limits itself to a time and space-bound alien … The African memory with all its underlying culture is not only blurred but seen as something to combat and eradicate from the memory of other. ("Diaspora" 71).

In this sense, memory is not only important in the formation of cultural affiliation in a new setting, it is also crucial to develop a sense of belonging. De Cesari and Rigney also state that "imagined communities become reconfigured through the agency of cultural remembrance" (9). Nash has an imagined community that he firmly believes in at the beginning, but as his memories are mediated through the new culture he lives in Liberia, his perspective begins to change. At first, we observe that he is a displaced subject alienated from his ancestral roots. His Christian education and attachment to Western perspective set him apart from the Liberians. Therefore, his religious upbringing is the only identity he holds on to. Also, he does not belong to his African ancestors' community that collectively recalls the past and shapes their culture accordingly. And, because of his race, he does not belong to the American society in Liberia, either. Believing in the "superiority of the American life over the African" (*CR* 27), he thinks he has the responsibility to "carry the word of God to the heathens" (19) in this "dark and benighted country" (31). He wants to return "home" (35), which is America for him. Therefore, he is not welcome by the Liberian people: "At times like this, it is strange to think that these people of Africa are called our ancestors, for with some of them you may do all you can but they still will be your enemy" he reflects (32). The problem is Nash is not a member of the collective past that Edward has provided him with, either. As he is not familiar with his ancestral culture, Nash cannot develop a critical stance to the Americans' business in Liberia. Edward has made him assume "the superiority of the American life over the African" (27). Thus, Nash belongs nowhere; the past he thinks he is a part of is no more than what Edward has created for his slave. This in-betweenness makes Nash question his position and quest in Liberia as his present predicament transforms his remembrance of the past.

Nash's transcultural movement provides him with another perspective that is his own; he reconsiders his Christian memories and compares his past with the present

circumstances that are "native." This can be explained on the basis of Hall's definition of transculturality of the colonizing experience: "[t]he differences, of course, between colonizing and colonized cultures remain profound. But they have never operated in a purely binary way and they certainly do so no longer" ("Question" 247). Nash manages to avoid the binary ways that would define his identity as a former slave. At first, he describes Liberia as a beautiful place of freedom: "It is the home of our race, and a country in which industry and perseverance are required to make a man happy and wealthy. Its laws are founded upon justice and equality, and here we may sit under the palm tree and enjoy the same privileges as out white brethren in America" he writes in a letter (18). He finds it difficult at first to believe that "these people of Africa are called [his] ancestors" (32) because he mimics Edward's ideological attitude. The way Nash describes Liberian life, its poor inhabitants, dirtiness, and their laziness are all evocative of a Eurocentric point of view. He evaluates what he sees as a missionary abandoned by his master because as a former slave who crosses the borders, he does not have an unmediated memory of Liberia. Although his hometown is a part of his heritage, he does not define himself as African; the "imagined community" he carries in his mind is more related to his allegiance to his master and Christianity than his racial or ethnic identity, which he is taught to consider inferior. Assuming the position of the white man he tries to educate people of Liberia according to American education system and thinks that workers on his farm "require a stern and watchful supervision" (27). But his experience of transculturality helps him form new connections and reconstruct his identity.

Nash's letters to Edward unfold the change in his perception and consciousness as a consequence of his new encounters that help shaping his identity. As a former slave who is educated, he writes back to his master and uncovers the deception behind the missionary work. His in-betweenness and growing disillusionment with Edward because of his neglecting attitude lead Nash to gradually embrace Liberian culture. When he loses his familial ties with Edward assuming that he is abandoned, Nash feels he is in exile. Renouncing Western ideology, he gets accustomed to Liberian culture over time. Although at first Liberia appears hostile to him, as he gets to know about the everyday practices of the local people, his sense of self and relation to Africa

undergo a transformation[24]. The impropriety of the fellow missionaries' behaviour also makes him doubt his mission and he comes to realize the hypocrisy behind the so-called civilizing mission. More significantly, his experience as a missionary servant to a white man brings him to a cultural and moral awareness of his identity as a black man. He witnesses "Americans, many of whom privately mock African civilisation" (41) and begins to think that "this American protectionism is a disgrace to our dignity, and a stain on the name of our country" (41) as he comes to realize the slave trade has been going on although Liberia is an independent country. As he becomes accustomed to the "native style of living" he begins to regard west as a "so-called civilised world" (31) and believes Edward uses him for his own purposes.

Nash's crossing of both cultural and geographical borders can be viewed in line with "the multitude of varying ways of life and lifestyles" that promote transculturality (Welsch "Transculturality" 196). His identity is embedded in transcultural networks of relationships that demonstrate how fluid identity constructions are. For instance, he looks back at his memories with his family in America missing his "Aunt Sophie, George, Hannah, Peter Thornton, Fanny Gray, Aggy and Charlotte, Miss Mathilda Danford, Henry, Randolph and Nancy" (20). While he refers to America as home, he clearly makes a home in Liberia, as well. Nash's embracing Liberian culture is not an act of return to an imaginary homeland. He is not welcome there at first. The Liberian people call him "the white man" (32) because of his Christian belief as well as his literacy. It is both to his advantage that he uses his letters to express his cultural identity but at the same time he is sent as a missionary because he has literacy. He studies African language, enjoys tribal gathering, and practices polygamy, getting married to native women. He knows that his lifestyle there causes "some offence to those who would hold on to America as a beacon of civilization" (40) and he is ostracized by the American settlers. In his last attempt to reach out to Edward, he writes that

> Liberia is the finest country for the colored man, for here he may live by the sweat of his brow …Things can be both inconvenient and uphill, and many hardships will no doubt be experienced. … We, the colored man, have been oppressed long enough. We need to contend for our rights, stand our ground,

[24] Nash's moving into the African hinterlands and adopting a native style of living is reminiscent of Joseph Conrad's character Kurtz in his *Heart of Darkness* (1902).

> and feel the love of liberty that can never be found in your America. Far from corrupting my soul, this Commonwealth of Liberia has provided me with the opportunity to open up my eyes and cast off the garb of ignorance which has encompassed me all too securely the whole course of my life. (61-62)

He comes to believe that "[t]his missionary work, this process of persuasion, is futile amongst these people" (62-63). He thinks he belongs to Liberia because he is "colored" (48) and he has become a "heathen" (57) again having rejected the Christian belief and doctrines. His allegiance with Liberia as "his" country is furthered by his suspension of the Christian faith: "Christianity can never take root in this country. Its young shoots will wither and die … I must suspend my faith and therefore freely choose to live the life of an African" (62). He becomes aware of the racial tension and abusive politics of ACS and his faith is weakened by the conditions. Just like the slave trade empties the resources and ruins the lives of the native populations there, Nash is exploited by Edward and now abandoned. He asks in his letters: "perhaps… you might explain to me why you used me for your purposes and then expelled me to this Liberian paradise" (62). Developing a political consciousness in Liberia, Nash reveals the ambivalence and fluidity of identity. His crossing the boundaries leads him to reconfigure his self in a transcultural connection. His past and present are merged now in his struggle to figure out his relationship with his master. Contrary to essentialist understandings of race, the novel shows that Nash's identity is constructed on the basis of his experience of displacement and in-betweenness.

It is also evident that Nash's letters to his former master function as a critique of the colonial mindset as their versions of the events are juxtaposed. The juxtaposition of the narratives of the two reveals that while Nash is desperately in need of financial assistance to fulfil his duty that he takes seriously, Edward is dismissive of it. At first, he keeps his former master informed on his condition through letters and asks for provisions for his failing health. Nash is not even equipped enough to convert the natives; he is in need of all the material that Edward is supposed to send him. Nash's requests for money and supplies are considered as "usual childish requests" by Edward (7). Hiding behind his alleged benevolence through the mission of the ACS, Edward only seeks words of gratitude in Nash's lines to prove the worth of his own efforts. Phillips provides the African "others" with the power to judge the master by allowing

them to hold a narrative position. Edward thinks he is a benevolent man in his engagement with slavery as he allows his slaves to learn reading and writing, and he "inherited from his father an aversion to the system which had allowed his fortunes to multiply" (13). However, it is gradually laid bare that his actions are not disinterested acts of benevolence.

Edward's journey discloses the responsibility and hypocrisy of the West in colonial practices. Despite his neglect of Nash's demands, Edward is so fond of his former slave that he endangers his own life to arrive in Liberia by going through an experience similar to the Middle Passage. But in fact, his attachment to Nash uncovers his hypocrisy, which is an embodiment of the hypocrisy of colonialism. He seems to be wishing the best for Nash and the native people but all he does is exploit them. Edward feels unwell during the journey; he gets "fever, the sleepless nights, the complex welter of emotions" (52). Yet, Nash's well-being would be Edward's victory as he has so much invested in him. Also, his relationship with his wife implies his feelings for Nash are not solely parental. Upon his finding out that it was Amelia who destroyed Nash's letters and now she is dead, he regrets his indifference towards her:

> Tears misted his eyes, for indeed his love for Amelia had festered and become stamped with a self-pity that was near-cousin to self-loathing. He simply craved to be offered the unconditional love of a child, could she not understand this? He looked ashamedly at the mauve contusions that decorated the several folds of his skin, and realized that the years had descended and smothered him like a fog. (55)

He justifies his actions by simplifying his exploitation of slave boys and ignores the feelings of his wife. However, this journey discloses his selfishness and sexual exploitation of Nash. In his letters Nash addresses him as "beloved benefactor" (17) and "father" (23). Nash shows his gratitude for being delivered from "robes of ignorance" thanks to his master: "you were kind enough to take me, a foolish child, from my parents and bring me up in your own dwelling as something more akin to son than servant" (21). But Amelia's dislike of Nash reveals Edward's homosexual desires for Nash. Phillips complicates the traditional relationship between slave and master by implying sexual abuse of young boys by slave owners. He highlights this as another "form of colonial exploitation" ("Crossing" 28). His abuse of Nash under the pretence

of benevolence and paternal bond discloses the hypocrisy of colonialism. Thus, Nash is both abused by his master and his colonial mission to which he dedicates himself.

The novel also lays bare the colonial use of religion to exploit the Africans. Although Edwards sees the American Colonization Society as a connection to "divest himself of the burden, or least some part of the burden, of being a slave-owner, a title which ran contrary to his Christian beliefs" (13-14), Edward infantilizes the black subjects who are seeking his recognition and approval in the missionary project. To him, it is a beneficial mission and, thanks to ACS, America "[will] be removing a cause of increasing social stress, and Africa [will] be civilized by the return of her descendants, who [are] now blessed with rational Christian minds" (9). However, his guiding Nash to turn him into a missionary is not an act of benevolence. He has made Nash believe that he is "blessed with rational Christian minds" (9). The slaves are taught Christian doctrines and literacy because of their contribution to and collaboration with the business carried out by the ruling ideology: "Being chosen for colonization was regarded by the most slaves and their masters as reward for faithful service. A skilled worker, who was also a converted Christian with a sound moral base, was considered a prime candidate" (9). In this case for Nash to question the system and benevolence of his master is not easy. But upon the misconduct of the fellow missionaries, Nash becomes more aware of the flaws in the system: "perhaps you have already heard, by means of some other source, that old brother Taylor and sister Nancy have both lost their faith. The former has in addition turned out to be a great and scandalous drunkard" (29) he informs Edward in his letter. He also mentions an American man, Mr Charles, who buys two boys from their fathers telling them he is going to teach the boys English and Christianity but instead he sells them to "a slave factory" (32). Besides, Nash's doubt of the importance of the mission can also be traced in his use of we and they dichotomy when referring to the Americans and the local people. It becomes more obvious to him that the mission is useless and the local people are reluctant to take part in the works of the missionaries. The local culture and the complexity of language show him how misleading the stereotypes about the African culture are. It is another instance illustrative of how transcultural connections reconstruct identity. Ironically, the education Nash has received from the colonizers

empower him to offer a critique of the system. He is neither the colonized subject nor the servant of the colonizer; his journey provides him with new routes and ways of identification through the transcultural remediation of the past.

Towards the end of the first section, Nash's attraction to the local culture is juxtaposed with Edwards's doubts of his mission when he falls ill: "Perhaps, thought Edward, this business of encouraging men to engage with a past and a history that are not truly their own, is after all, ill judged" (52). This is one of the instances where Phillips creates ambiguity to urge the reader to question which past or whose history this is. Such questioning is an attempt to unsettle the essentialist notions of culture and nation. Nash's transcultural journey makes him aware of the plurality of his identity and provides him with multiple perspectives regarding home and belonging; he both belongs in America and Liberia, but, at the same time, he belongs nowhere. But Edward still believes Nash belongs with him and regrets having sent Nash "to this inhospitable and heathen corner of the world" (52). He asks his former slave Madison to take him to the settlement where Nash spent his last days:

> Edward … was ill-equipped to disguise his true feelings of disgust in the midst of this spectre of peopled desolation. … The natives stared at him, and watched as the white man's lips formed the words, but no sound was heard. Still, Edward continued to *sing* his hymn. The natives looked on and wondered what evil spirits had populated this poor man's soul and dragged him down to such a level of abasement. Their hearts began to swell with the pity that one feels for a fellow being who has lost both his way and his sense of purpose. This strange old white man. (69-70)

He begins to regret his neglect of Nash and his attempts end up in despair. He receives Nash's last letter alongside the news that he died from an epidemic in the region. He is also shocked to find out that Nash had three wives and six children and dedicated himself to the freedom of Liberian people there. Yet, insisting on his Eurocentric thoughts, Edward tells Madison about his plans to take Nash's children with him to the United States so that they might enjoy "a proper Christian life amongst civilized people" (68). His plans for the children can be interpreted as his attempt to relieve his guilty conscience for the harm he has caused so far. It is not clear whether he will take responsibility this time with a refreshed mind. Goyal interprets Edward's reconsidering what he has done after Nash's death as an act "in favor of Edwards's

moral and psychological quandaries" (19) and offers a critique of Phillips's choices. To Goyal, Phillips sacrifices Nash for the representation of the moral growth of a slave owner. However, as Nash's children will probably face a different fate, the novel offers another perspective that might be a further step in the reconsideration of the history and future of black subjectivity. Contrary to Goyal's view, this incident offers another transcultural trajectory that might have been ignored in historical accounts. Considering the celebratory tone of the African father in the epilogue, it can be held that Nash's children will follow a different path.

The next chapter of the novel focuses on the psychological damage caused by slavery as particularly reflected in Martha's trauma of separation from her daughter.[25] In line with her disrupted memories, the narrative of this section shifts back and forth in time. When the Hoffmans, who buys Martha at the auction in Kansas, decide to take her "back across river" to sell her, she runs away and joins the pioneers who are heading to California "prospecting for a new life without having to pay no heed to the white man and his ways" (73) and dreaming of living in "a place where your name [isn't]"boy" or "aunty", and where you [can] be a part of this country without feeling like you wasn't really a part" (74). She hopes to live among black people and to find her daughter. Her escape is an act of resistance both to the colonial discourse and enslavement. As she reflects, "she [will] never again head east. … She [has] a westward soul which [has] found its natural-born home in the bosom of her daughter" (94). But she is too old to go on a journey and gives up the struggle; she has to leave the wagon trail "like a useless load" (92). She lies dying when she remembers her journey. When a white woman finds her and offers help, it is too late for Martha.

Memories are more efficient in determining her present consciousness than the current circumstances she lives in. The abolition of slavery does not improve the circumstances for Martha, who tries to establish a new life. Since Martha has lost her family, freedom does not mean anything for her anymore: "[w]ar came and war went and, … I was free now, but it was difficult to tell what difference being free was

[25] Martha's story resonates with Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (1987) which tells the story of a former slave woman named Sethe, who is haunted by the ghost of the daughter she herself killed to save her from being enslaved.

making to my life" (84). She returns to traumatic memories of her separation from her first husband Lucas, daughter Eliza Mae, her friend Lucy, and her second husband Chester, who was murdered for killing a white man. Her memories mostly focus on the moments of being sold as a commodity at the auction and her helplessness as a mother:

> My Eliza-Mae hold on to me, but it will be of no avail. She will be a prime purchase. And on her own she stands a better chance of a fine family. I want to tell her this, to encourage her to let go, but I have not the heart. … 'Moma' Eliza-Mae whispers the word over and over again, as though this were the only word she possessed. This word. This word only. (77)

She is haunted by Eliza-Mae's calling her "Moma" just as the African father hears the voice of common memory. Since familial ties among slaves are never recognized by their masters, her family is sold like a piece of property alongside the items such as "[f]arm animals. Household furniture. Farm tools" (76). Since she is unable to protect her daughter, she feels she is not enough as a mother. Her helplessness reveals itself in a recurring image in her memories of combing her daughter's hair. Through the repetition of certain moments in her narrative, memory becomes a site which disrupts time and space; the past is narrated in the present tense and seeps into the current timeline.

Her reexperiencing the traumatic past becomes a determiner in her identity construction. Particularly, her abandonment by the pioneers reminds her of former abandonments and her memories of being sold as a slave. To emphasize this point in the narrative, Martha's story is told through alternating first- and third-person narration; the contemporary incidents are given by an extradiegetic narrator while her past is given in the present tense by the young Martha's first-person narration since the memory of traumatic moments still pervades her mind. Her voice occasionally interrupts the third-person narration to exert power on her life account. Also, the memory of her daughter is narrated by her first-person narration in the present tense but her contemporary encounter with the white woman in Denver is given in the past tense because she lives in the past and cannot accommodate her current plight. Memory persists in the present rendering the effect of the past as powerful in determining the present: "she no longer possesse[s] either a husband or a daughter, but

her memory of their loss [is] clear" (78). This permeating of the past into the present is parallel to the effects of the legacy of slavery on the disrupted familial relationships. Familial ties are broken as the enslaved people are treated as mere commodities. Thus, there could be no return for Martha to her daughter Eliza-Mae like the siblings of the African father in the prologue.

In his explanation of diaspora Gilroy mentions narratives of journey that have a "mnemonic function" as they direct the group's consciousness to the common history (*The Black Atlantic* 198). Martha's story can be evaluated on the basis of such narratives. Martha's memory of the auction of her family conveys the sense of dislocation the slaves experience. The trauma of her loss and her dreams connect her to the community she joins in the wagon as they have the same sense of loss and suffering. Like the other former slaves who have crossed the river, "[s]he no longer possesse[s] either a husband or a daughter, but her memory of their loss [is] clear" (78). Thus, when she lies closing her eyes and remembers her days in Virginia, she

> sometimes heard voices. … She found herself assaulted by loneliness, and drifting into middle age without a family. Voices from the past. Some she recognized. Some she did not. But, nevertheless, she listened…Martha climbed to her feet and began to run. (Like the wind, girl). Never again would she stand on an auction block. (Never.) Never again would she would she be renamed. (Never.) Never again would she belong to anybody. (No sir, never.). (79-80)

It is again the voice of "common memory" that is shared by those who have similar experiences in crossing the boundaries. In relation to the voices Martha hears, Low argues that Martha "occupies a privileged position by being the figure who hears voices of other kinsfolk calling out not to be forgotten or forsaken" (Low 136). Martha even recalls "[t]hrough some atavistic mist, [she] peered back east…to a smooth white beach where a trembling girl waited with two boys and a man. Standing off, a ship. Her journey had been a long one…Her course was run. *Father, why hast thou forsaken me*?" (*CR* 73) which refers to a moment depicting the African father selling his children at the beginning of the novel. Like the father, she hears the voices of the descendants and "like him, Martha presides over stories of love, abandonment, and survival" (Low 136). Religion does not console her since she is "unable to sympathize with the sufferings of the son of God when set against her own private misery" (79).

Her life is disrupted by the transactions the slave owners has carried out; just like Hamilton's logbook full of numbers and list of goods, the auctioneers only focus on "calling out the date, the place, the time" (76), which causes Martha to lose her faith completely. She dreams of a better place where she can have a sense of belonging. When the white woman offers help to her, she thinks "[p]erhaps this woman [has] bought her daughter?" (74) not expecting any help from a white person. When her narrative comes back to the present moment, she confuses the white woman with her daughter, whom she imagines, now "a tall, sturdy colored woman of some social standing" (94). These "acts of memory that constantly rework and reinvent the content of what is being remembered" (Baronian et al. 15) becomes the reality Martha lives in. She imagines a hopeful future for her daughter to sooth her own pain. In her vision, Eliza-Mae is a strong grown-up woman. In this way, her memories of her daughter have transformed and transcended the boundaries that separates them and offer her "the creative imagining of the past in service of the present and an imagined future" (Ben-Amos and Weissberg 299). Dreaming of a familial reunion with her family, Martha wishes her long lost daughter would be there to help her instead of the white woman. But there is no turning back; she cannot endure the challenges that a black person is exposed to, and dies. As such, the novel offers another perspective to the disruption caused by slavery. Martha manages to create her own reality in her memories and dreams that reveal both the traumatic aspect of her journey and the will of individual agency. Even though she loses her family and friends, she manages to cross the borders and presents another individual story in the history of the black Atlantic.

Before switching to Travis's story, the third section "Crossing the River", which focuses on the slave-ship of Captain Hamilton, disrupts the narrative of the three siblings to offer another perspective to the history of the slave trade. Considering that the chapter has the same title as the novel and is situated in the middle of the novel, it can be held that Phillips draws attention to the agency of the white men in the history of slavery and suggests that they also cross the river. It also implies that this narrative is not a one-sided account of the past. Phillips creates a narrative consciousness by

complicating and reinventing the history of the Middle Passage because, as Chassot notes,

> the experience of the Middle Passage was also long absent from the history of the slave trade. If historians have always been centrally concerned with the transatlantic journey, only quite recently have they turned away from its economic and demographic aspects to attend to its psychological, social, and cultural dimensions and finally attempt to document the captives' experience. (Chassot 38)

Connecting all the stories of the siblings in the experience of the Middle Passage, the position and title of this section suggests that Hamilton's story is one of those stories that belong to the continuing legacy of slavery and colonialism. This section is set in the 1750s on board the slave vessel *The Duke of York* on the west coast of Africa and mainly deals with Hamilton's logbook, which is based on John Newton's *Journal of a Slave Trader: 1750-1754.* Phillips himself states in the "Acknowledgements" of the novel: "I have employed many sources in the preparation for this novel, but would like to express my particular obligation to John Newton's eighteenth-century *Journal of a Slave Trader*, which has furnished me with valuable research material for Part III" (n. pag.). The novel's dialogue with Newton's travel notes allows it to bring together official history and memory as the logbook is a product of the cultural memory of slavery. With regard to this, Vanessa Guignery claims that this section of the novel "employs pastiche through its imitation of the style of Newton's authentic logbook and letters to his wife" (120). Phillips engages with an authentic eighteenth-century text to draw attention to the "constructedness of any discourse" in the past which can be borrowed and reused in different contexts (120). It is his strategy to emphasize the inconsistencies of the historical accounts. Hamilton's logbook covers the period between August 1752 and May 1753 in a chronological order. However, there are ellipses between the entries of the journal skipping several days implying the fragmentedness of his account. The incomplete structure of the journal can be interpreted as a means of foregrounding the missing parts of official history, the ignored voices and stories, which the novel seeks to uncover. As such, the novel both hints at the textuality and unreliability of historical accounts and keeps the memory of

the Middle Passage alive by urging the reader to think about what might also be missing in the archives of slavery.

Phillips's use of Newton's records has also been considered a contested choice. While Guignery deals with the hypertextuality of the novel through which, as she argues, Phillips demands an interrogation of the historical archive (144), to Abigail Ward, it is risky to rely on the narratives of traders or plantation owners "because of the possibility of transforming these documents into monuments" ("Postcolonial" 247). Likewise, Marcus Wood considers Phillips's appropriation of some dates and the numbers identifying the slaves in the log as a distortion of the historical documents (54) and criticizes Phillips for bringing Newton's "terrifying mentality" to the fore (59). However, Fatim Boutros argues that the novel unsettles "stereotypical views of victims and perpetrators" by making use of actual documents (184). In this sense, it can be said that by making use of historical records and distorting some parts of them, Phillips draws a more striking portrait of slavery beyond the stereotypes that already pervade the perceived history. The novel does not only fill in the blanks left by the official accounts; through the memory of the siblings, it interrogates the ignored connections across borders. In this respect, by employing Newton's texts, Phillips makes his fiction more evidential and striking because Newton's, or Hamilton's, the logbook is in fact the embodiment of the Western perspective on the history of slavery.

The logbook records Hamilton's activities of buying and selling slaves with numerical data. It includes a list of crew members and names of those who die on the journey. As his records convey, Hamilton's logic only shows the technical problems he faces in his routine economic pursuit: "11 slaves, of whom I picked 5, viz., 4 men, 1 woman" are listed in his book (105). He reduces the slaves into numbers and calculates his profit regardless of the loss caused by diseases. In this sense, his trade records are a part of Western documents that demonstrate the official history recorded by the colonial ideology. As Nora suggests, "historical memories are analytic and critical, precise and distinctive. They have to do with reason - which instructs without convincing... Historical memories filter, accumulate, capitalize and transmit" ("Between" 10). There is no place for an account of "lived experience" in history (Halbwachs, "The Collective" 57). The mechanical interaction conveyed to the reader

through the logbook can also be explained on the basis of the "epistemological constraints" Ledent mentions (*Caryl* 114). As she argues, "chronology, imposed by the West on the world at large" is reflected in the pursuit of unity and accuracy of his list (114). On the contrary, the enslaved subject's experience cannot be contained in a single linear narrative as it is disrupted and fragmented by the rupture caused by slavery. Nash, Martha, Travis and Joyce's stories are those that are either undocumented or dominated by the white people's version of history. Thus, the novel focuses on the missing parts of official histories, namely, the memories of the oppressed people that cannot be accurately contained by the Western historiography. Their story involves their feelings of loss and displacement as well as the process of identity negotiation as they cross the borders. Therefore, rather than the numerical information provided by the log, the ellipses and gaps between dates, draw attention to the deliberately ignored aspects of what might have happened in the past. In other words, the novel not only gives a fictional account of the underrecorded events through the story of the siblings, but also allows the interrogation of the accounts of the past through the use of the logbook.

Phillips revises Newton's journal by creating a version of it and particularly foregrounds the love letters written by Newton to his wife in Hamilton's fictional account. This can be viewed as an attempt to illustrate an unfamiliar and unexpected aspect of the life of the slave trader figure. Unlike traditional associations of a slave trader, Hamilton sounds passionate and caring in his letters to his wife:

> I confess that, when alone, the recollection of my past with you overpowers me with a tender concern, and such thoughts give me a pleasure, second only to that of being actually you. I have written myself into tears, yet I feel a serenity I never imagined till I was able to call you mine. (110)

These words written by such a man who engages in a cruel business complicate the possible judgements on the character. He is not a dehumanized figure; rather, he is an ordinary man who is capable of love. It is notable that Newton is known to be "a dedicated abolitionist" (Guignery 122). In this sense, the parallels Phillips forms between Newton and Hamilton is in line with how, in almost all of his novels, Phillips creates such characters who are never depicted as completely monstrous. Ward notes that "Phillips has created a multidimensional and intriguing character, arguably

indicative of the complexities of slavery, where ordinary men, often with wives and families, became embroiled in the trade" ("Outstretched" 26). In so doing, Phillips weaves connections between Hamilton's vocational and private life. He is rather a lonely figure sharing the fate of his crew and the slaves on board as he also contracts a disease. He remembers those days he spent with his wife as a "valuable and precious time" (108) and depicts his present conditions as "fatigue and difficulty" (108). Other sea captains think Hamilton is "a slave" to his wife (109), which destabilizes his position as an authority figure. In this sense, just like Edward's in the first part of the novel, Hamilton's wife in the domestic sphere reveals another aspect of him. Phillips's portrayal of the slave captain as not only an opportunist and greedy person but also as a man who is capable of showing affection as indicated in his letters to his wife forms a contrast to the conventional representations of slave traders. As Ledent contends in relation to Phillips's treatment of such characters, the aim of his writing is not to drive anyone to fury but "to fathom and expose its complex mechanisms and so fight the racism it has given rise to" ("Remembering" 279). Phillips portrays Hamilton as an ordinary person who makes fortunes enslaving others. Also, Hamilton is capable of noticing the slaves' grief as he mentions in his log how "[t]hey huddle together, and sing their melancholy lamentations" (124). However, it is ironical that while he is homesick and thinks of the financial security of his family, he destroys other families and separates people from their homelands. He writes to his wife: "My Dearest, …the lives of the people who dwell hereabouts, whose fortunes are entrusted to my care … are petty concerns when set against my love for you" (108), and ends his letter with his wishes: "My sole pleasure is to dream of our future children, and our family life together" (110). In line with this, it is notable how Phillips comments on Hamilton's personality in an interview:

> [L]et me also add something which shows us the huge paradox of this guy's mind, some insight into the mind of a slave trader. As he's wreaking havoc on other people's families, he's dreaming of beginning a family of his own. He can't see that, can't recognize his own contradictions, but hopefully we can. ("Of This" 159)

Thus, Phillips deliberately attributes tenderness and compassion to Hamilton, that is, qualities that an ordinary person can have. It is especially striking to see that an

ordinary man like him is capable of being involved in such atrocious acts as the slave trade, torturing others, destroying families, leaving people to death for the sake of money. While slave traders like Hamilton seek profit at the expense of others' lives, victims like Martha reveal the traumatic experience of enslaved people.

The position of this section between Martha's memories, which she deems more real than her current dismay, and Travis's story of marginalization as a black soldier, is a mnemonic strategy Phillips uses in order to lay bare the contrast between memories of human loss and the commodification of people by the colonial mindset that considers slaves as numbers on a list. To highlight the difference in the two perspectives, Phillips adds another dimension to Hamilton's personality. It is revealed to the reader that Hamilton is also a victim of the colonial system, which places this character in a more complicated position than stereotypical representations of slave traders. Hamilton writes to his wife about his father's "belief that the teachings of the Lord were incompatible with his chosen occupation" (110), which suggests the corruption he feels in his soul and that this is the fate of the slave trader. As Lenz points out, bringing together these two aspects of the slave trader's life,

> Phillips reveals the interrelatedness of two seemingly separate and oppositional discourses, exposing the eighteenth-century sentimentalism and celebration of the bonds of the middle-class family as the reverse side of the spirit of capitalism, of the economic rationalism of the time, and of colonial contempt for the black "primitive natives" in Africa, whom the white Christian slave-trader does not recognize as human beings. (247)

For Hamilton, those people who are his crew and slaves are inferior beings that do not require much attention. Sometimes he punishes them "with a dozen stripes of the cat" (103). On the other hand, he plays the role of the affectionate husband and successful merchant to establish his reputation and to counterbalance his dehumanizing deeds. He thinks it is his duty to follow in his father's footsteps in business who "cultivated a passionate hatred" (118) for slaves. It suggests that the business of slave trade has been a part of their life for generations. His father, who is also a captain, dies on the western coast of Africa, which suggests "the disruption of family life" for white people as well (Ilona 7). Also, Hamilton is rejected by one of the officers, who worked with his late father, when he wants to be taken to visit his father's grave because he is

considered to be a "*gentleman-passenger*" (*CR* 109). In this sense, the logbook also functions as a reminder that it is not only black people but also the white people who experience the disruption of families and crisscross the borders. It offers a nuanced understanding of both sides' plight. In other words, through his explorations of Western colonial history, Phillips exposes the effects of the Middle Passage on both victims and persecutors.

In the next part, "Somewhere in England," the story follows the effects of war and the cultural intolerance in mid-twentieth-century Yorkshire, England. Unlike Hamilton's linear account, Joyce's journal is written in a nonlinear form covering twenty-five years, from 1936 to 1963. Her journal entries are in fragments interrupted by memories to comment on the current events that have shaped her present perspectives. It is more about her feelings for Travis, her isolation and detachment from the community she lives in. Even though this section is expected to focus on Travis's dislocation, the narrative focuses on Joyce's perspective that conveys to us a white woman's sense of dislocation and marginalization because of her relationship with a black man.

Contrary to the colonial travel log in the previous section, the novel offers a different discursive construction in Joyce's entries. As a white woman she is a marginal figure that contests the colonial ideology; therefore, in the epilogue she is embraced by the African father as one of his children. Like the African siblings, Joyce comes from a broken family, too. She has no memory of her father, who was killed in World War I, and she mentions her mother as someone whose "sole occupation in life seems to be to make me feel guilty" (150). Joyce moves to the village she currently lives in because her hometown was devastated during the war. When she visits her hometown to find her mother, she is disappointed by the scene:

> When I saw the town, I wanted to cry. …I couldn't believe that this was my town. …I stared at buildings that were now reduced to one or maybe two walls…. It occurred to me that I was lost. That all the familiar landmarks had gone…I walked on knowing that there was no longer any such thing as a familiar route. (179-80)

The novel sets the scene before Travis arrives in England. It is a land where trauma and suffering are caused by the so-called civilized Europeans who kill one another in

the war. The despair and alienation Joyce feels resonates with the idea of "no return" dating back to the African father's epilogue. Joyce's sense of loss and her memories do not echo that of a single community or nation; her feelings emanate from the common experience that may have appeared at another place and time throughout history. In this sense, the novel draws parallels between the suffering caused by the slave trade and the war. Joyce and the siblings share the experience of dislocation and homelessness that unite them through memories of "collective images and narratives of the past" (Erll, "Travelling" 12). Memory has a "multidirectional" (Rothberg) aspect in establishing a cross-cultural engagement and bringing together the memory of war and the memory of slavery, two significant frameworks of British history. The traumatic displacement of soldiers and Joyce's estrangement from the society are juxtaposed with the narratives of black diaspora given in the other sections of the novel. Consequently, the novel underscores how memory functions to construct a sense of community of both white and black people who have been victimized in history. When Joyce describes the arrival of the American soldiers in the village, she also mentions the villagers' attitude towards them. They are expecting the American soldiers to be all white. When they see that there are black soldiers as well, as Joyce narrates, "[s]ome of the villagers couldn't contain themselves. They began to whisper to each other, and they pointed. 1 suppose we were all shocked, for we had nothing to prepare us for this" (129). One of the white officers comes to Joyce's shop and says: "[a] lot of these boys are not used to us treating them as equals" (145) implying the black soldiers in the group who are still defined by colonial ideology. With regard to the presence of African American troops in Britain during World War II, Carby states that "it is not the Windrush alone which initiated a new phase in the formation of a Caribbean diaspora in the UK and ushered in a new racial state, … but the presence of black civilian and military personnel during World War II" (641). Just like in the slave trade, during the time of war, when nationalism increases, black people encounter racism. As the newspapers of the period write, "one Englishman is worth two Germans, four French, twenty Arabs, forty Italians, and any number of Indians" (164). In this respect, the novel reconnects the British society during the war with its history of the slave trade. Also, the reaction to Travis's troops in the village resonates with the

local people's reaction to the post-war migrants as illustrated in *In the Falling Snow*. The Windrush generation is invited to Britain to fill labour vacancies. Similarly, the black GI is in England to defend the country against its enemies. In both cases, it is British society that needs their help, yet black people encounter racism and hostility. Therefore, as a white Englishwoman, Joyce's narrative offers an alternative to the racist attitude underlying townspeople's hostility. Her journal entries do not draw attention to the soldiers' race; she is more interested in their shared experience of displacement.

The narrative shifts back and forth in time to bring forth the effects of memory and its role in challenging the racist ideology by showing that the horrors of the past continue to affect both white and black subjectivities in different forms in the present society. Phillips introduces strict social and racial barriers creating divisions that need to be crossed. The burden of the past is not only influential on the black diaspora; it is also a part of the lives of people like Joyce and persecutors like Captain Hamilton. Joyce does not mention that Travis is black in the first entries of her diary. She is not one of those local people who believe in racial divides and stereotypes; she is like an "uninvited outsider" (129) among them. She remembers being ostracized by these people when she first moved to the village. Just like the black soldiers, she, too, was gazed upon by the townspeople. She reflects, "[o]nce the men had vanished, eyes turned upon me. I was now the object of curiosity. The uninvited outsider. There was nobody with whom I might whisper. I stared back at their accusing eyes and then stepped back into the shop" (129). When her abusive husband Len was sent to prison for his business in the black market, as she remembers: "[s]omething was lifted from me the moment they took him away. My chest unknotted. I could breathe again" (199). Because of her husband's crime, she has become an outcast. As a lonely woman whose husband is in prison, she always feels the curious looks of the village community on her. Her status as an outsider makes her feel close to the soldiers. Travis also feels that she is different from the townspeople: "I guess you don't act like them in some ways. Can't say how exactly, but just different. Inside I was smiling. That was just what I wanted to hear" he says to her (163). She is glad that somebody has noticed her difference but when they get closer, people begin to gossip. After she dances with

Travis at the army's camp dances, some army members beat and report him as found drunk. Then Joyce begins to understand the extent of racial division and intolerance.

Joyce is also denounced by the townspeople for her relationship with Travis, which is considered as miscegenation. It was a time when

> [w]hite women were counseled by families, friends and authorities alike, against marriage with black men; black American soldiers who wished to marry British women were refused permission to do so by their Commanding Officers and quickly transferred. … The result was disastrous for their offspring. (Carby 172).

Relationships between white and black people are also seen as a "threat to the nation's future" (172). And mixed-race children are considered as the outcome of this threat. Therefore, Joyce's husband Len condemns her too by blaming her for being a "traitor to [her] own kind" (217), implying her crossing the racial boundaries and breaking social norms. After Joyce gets divorced from Len, Travis gets permission to marry her from his commanding officer on the condition that they will not live in the United States because of the segregation laws. They get married during Travis's leave but when he is stationed in Italy, he is shot and dies "[i]n a strange country. Among people he hardly knew" (229). As the narrative is not linear, his death is revealed by a telegram which is intertwined with the account of their son Greer's coming home eighteen years later. In Joyce's entry dated 1963, when she was married with two children, she writes:

> I stared at Greer and longed for him to stay as dearly as I longed for him to leave. … A handsome man. Yes, a man. No longer a baby. …My GI baby… It must go into the care of the Country Council as an orphan, love. … Your father and I, Greer. We couldn't show off. We had to be careful… He was my son. Our son. (224)

It is later revealed that she gives birth to Travis's child but has to give him away for adoption. Familial bonds are disrupted again, but, this time, unlike the previous instances, a white woman is also involved, thereby revealing unexpected connections and the bond made possible by the black Atlantic experience. Joyce's sense of loss, alienation, and being forced to give up her son for adoption connect her to the African father and Martha who are also separated from their children. Therefore, in the last pages of the novel the African father counts Joyce as one of his children. This becomes the story of Joyce more than Travis's because his voice is unheard throughout the

narrative as a reflection of the absence of the black voice in Western history. When Phillips is asked about Travis's invisibility in an interview with Jaggi, he states:

> I tried to find a voice for Travis. I travelled down south during the research, drove round Georgia and Alabama for days in search of Travis. I couldn't find him anywhere, but I wasn't prepared to invent a voice. … One thing I know is that Joyce was speaking to me forcefully, powerfully, in the dialect I grew up speaking, which is Yorkshire. I understood that intuitively. ("Crossing" 27)

Including a white woman among the African father's children is again a very significant and a highly contested decision on the part of Phillips. To Goyal, "Joyce's inclusion situates white characters at the heart of the African diaspora, as victims of history rather than its agents" (21). However, the African father's embracing attitude can be viewed as another instance where the novel traces alternative routes by privileging Joyce as a narrator. Phillips points out that the reason he wrote this novel is "so all of us can open our minds" and he rejects "racially narrow readings" of his work ("Other Voices" 134). Racially essentialist categories of identification are unacceptable to Phillips. Thus, he clearly avoids investing in racial solidarity and rejects racial binaries by including Joyce as a child of the African father. Joyce's inclusion challenges the notion that black Atlantic experience involves only black people by illustrating its memory transcending racial, cultural, national boundaries comprising both black and white.

Rather than judging Joyce for giving up her son, the narrative reveals the racial ideologies on both sides of the Atlantic, which neither allow her to be a single mother with a mixed-race child in England nor leave her a chance to live with her son in the US, although her husband dies in war fighting for the US. Greer is another child taken from his mother like the children sold into slavery. Evidently, more than a century later nothing has changed much; still the legacy of slavery continues to disrupt families. Despite the hatred and racism they encounter, their shared experience unites the members of black diaspora and white people in transcultural connections. Joyce's separation from her child echoes the familial disruptions in other parts of the novel, but this time Phillips ends the story with a glimmer of hope since Greer and Joyce have a chance to see each other. Yet, the novel does not reveal romantic or unrealistic hopefulness; rather, it suggests that it is not possible to offer an unproblematic

resolution to these issues. As a mixed-race child in a hostile society, Greer suffers the trauma of being abandoned and obviously Joyce is still not able to reclaim him. Her hesitation is revealed in her words: "I was ashamed. I wasn't ready. … I almost said make yourself at home, but I didn't. at least I avoided that" (231-32). Greer remains a dislocated child just as the siblings and Martha's daughter, whose fate is unknown, but the novel gives voice to the plight of the African children by recounting the stories of broken families and demanding a responsible reconsideration of the denied or ignored aspects of history.

The memory of the other side of the "river" crosses the boundaries in diverse ways. One of them is revealed through the products that are traded in return for slaves in the past. The GI soldiers bring the townspeople some presents: "[a]n orange, a pack of cigarettes, and some candy, as they call it. Chocolate is what we call it, and for most of us it was like being given lumps of gold" (166) notes Joyce in her diary. As Ledent contends, it is ironical that "the black GIs … brought with them the very products that triggered off slavery" (*Caryl* 123). These products are reminiscent of the manufactured goods that were made of raw materials, such as sugar, rice, tobacco, obtained in colonial lands for which the merchants traded slaves. Thus, in a way, they are markers of slave labour and material exploitation during colonialism. "Plundered from other continents," such products "radically changed the Western way of life, which could no longer claim cultural homogeneity" (123). Also, they are indicators of how western modernity has achieved its economic hegemony through the slave trade. As such, Travis's story urges the reader to question the dialogue between western history and Africa since memory of the slave trade appears in the present revealing the persistency of discrimination and exploitation. Just like his ancestors were exploited in the slave trade, Travis, who is already marginalized in the army by the white soldiers, is brought to England, another corner of the triangle of the slave trade, to fight for the survival of the English and to die in a battle in Italy for the wellbeing of Europe. It also indicates the double marginalization of the black soldiers who are not even considered American.

The novel is dedicated to "those who crossed the river" which refers to all people who cross the established boundaries. It is also notable that Phillips uses the

word “river” for the Atlantic Ocean as if it is just a flowing watercourse which is not that difficult to crossover. This is in line with the celebratory tone and his acknowledgement that it is not a pessimistic novel. Phillips sets all his characters on a journey as the members of the black diaspora do across centuries. In his 1993 essay entitled “Water”, identifying himself with them, he discusses the heritage of the Middle Passage connecting histories:

> Water. My life has been determined by a journey across water. Across the Atlantic Ocean. It was the people of the west coast of Africa who, looking out at the vastness of the ocean, first thought of it as a mighty river. Their journey - my journey - our journey, for if some were below, then others were on deck - our journey, back then in seventeen hundred and something, has changed for ever the nature of both British and American society. … The fact is the journey is rooted deeply in my soul. And in your soul too. Water. Ribbons of water which ineluctably bind us together, one to the other. (165-66)

His interpretation of water as connecting diaspora is also in line with Gilroy’s understanding of “routes” and being on the move. In a similar vein, emphasizing water as a zone of interconnectedness, Gilroy points out that the black Atlantic, which has been “continually crisscrossed by the movements of black people - not only as commodities but engaged in various struggles towards emancipation, autonomy, and citizenship – provides a means to re-examine the problems of nationality, location, identity, and historical memory” (16). To him, the ocean should not be considered only in relation to slavery and suffering; it also connotes diverse memories and convergences. The act of “crossing” comes with a rupture in each case with regard to the reconstruction of the self. Similarly, in an interview with Clingman, Phillips comments on the function of his reference to water in the title of the novel: “I’m interested in what brings us together and what allows us to meet each other, and water, to me, is a pathway along which we continue to meet and encounter each other. I’d rather be on the path than at ‘home’ at the beginning or at the end of the journey” (“Other” 117). In this sense, it posits a dual position. On the one hand, water causes dislocation, disruption of peoples; on the other hand, it is fluid like identity and heterogeneous as it mingles with other watercourses just like in the case of nations and cultures. It is water that divides the world of the so-called civilized people from that of the allegedly uncivilized one, but also it connects them. It is associated with

transcending the allegedly impermeable borders between different cultures that actually help in constructing new identifications. In this sense, the shared experience of the Atlantic is echoed in the image of water.

Crossing borders has become a literary theme in Phillips's work as it allows the exploration of travel as an essential process for the formation of memories and diaspora. Each instance of river-crossing symbolically reveals the porousness of borders and plurality inherent in identity. It also suggests displacement as a part of the diasporic experience. In Martha's story, on one bank of the Missouri, black people can be enslaved, but, on the other side of the river, they are free. It is the "symbol of arbitrariness of all human societal system" (Ledent, *Caryl* 110). Martha crosses the river in search of her daughter; Nash is an alienated man who sees his Liberian people as savages; Edward crosses the Atlantic in search of Nash; Hamilton crosses the river for trade; and, Travis crosses the border to fight for the white people's cause. The border crossing always ends with a transformation; each section of the novel is marked by a symbolic river-crossing that implies transcending racial, national, cultural boundaries. But the novel's tone is ambivalent since Phillips neither celebrates the act of crossing and transformation nor promotes the discourses of fixed origins. As the African father says, "[t]here are no paths in water. No signposts. There is no return…. You are beyond. Broken-off, like limbs from a tree. But not lost, for you carry within your bodies the seeds of new trees" (1-2), so the novel just illustrates how the act of transcending borders discloses their artificiality and fluidity. The past is always mediated and transformed by the present as Stuart Hall contends: "there can, therefore, be no simple 'return' or 'recovery' of the ancestral past which is not re-experienced through the categories of the present" ("New" 226). Addressing the myth of return, the novel refutes the idea of mythical homeland, which depends on ethnic purity and cultural essentialism. In Avtar Brah's words, "'home' is a mythic place of desire in the diasporic imagination" (192). It is repeated by Hamilton when he finishes loading his cargo and begins the journey back: "We have lost sight of Africa" (124). It is in line with Hall's claim that "The original 'Africa' is no longer there. … History is, in that sense, irreversible. …we can't literally go home again" ("Cultural Identity" 76). What is historically lost is always there in the memories but cannot be taken back because

of the transformation of the subject. The characters reconstruct their identity in relation to their experiences once they cross the river. The fractured memory of Africa is positioned to anticipate future possibilities as also illustrated by the inclusion of Joyce amongst the children of Africa. With Joyce and Greer, the novel sets an optimistic tone reassuring the future of diaspora as indicated in the epilogue. Thus, the future is shaped by the routes.

The fragmented structure of the novel is parallel to the multiplicity of narrators and transculturality of the African diaspora experience. Ledent argues that "temporal discontinuity" is an evidence of Phillips's "strategy that requires concentration and imagination on the reader's part if it is to be effective" and the gaps and silences are "representational", "subversive", and "create a new plural and cross-cultural identity" (*Caryl* 115). The fragmentation not only subverts the conventional structure of linear narratives but also mirrors the dispersal and dislocation of the Africans, thereby it represents the exilic experience. The crisscrossing of the narrative line allows a space for the voices of diaspora to be heard in an incomplete process of shaping and reshaping of identities. For instance, as a freed slave, educated in Christian doctrines, Nash evaluates Africa from the perspective of the colonizers at first. Edward is also a very unconventional figure as a slave master. Joyce is not a traditional white woman that can be found in historical records. The plurality of these voices exposes the arbitrariness of divisions and undermine the cultural essentialism upon which the binaries are established.

Throughout the novel, diverse associations recall multiple memories to offer the complexity of the Middle Passage experience and its consequences. To exemplify this, the chorus of the common memory involves the voice of slave traders like Hamilton as well as the voices of the slaves. These intermingled voices are not rendered heroic or judged with a vindictive attitude in the novel. Ward argues that the novel "envisages a meeting between black and white people; an acknowledgement and understanding of slavery which rejects a rhetoric of blame" to avoid establishing an atmosphere of "recrimination and retribution" ("Outstretched" 22). In a similar vein, McLeod points out that "Phillips's approach opens up the possibility of a critical understanding of others, eschewing the reflex of either moral condemnation or

applause" ("Between" 17). The characters are not condemned for their thoughts or feelings; rather, the complexity of their personalities is emphasized. The slave owners and colonizers are following certain traditions: Edward is involved with "God's work" (10), Hamilton just takes over his father's business, so he is kind of a victim, too. He is shown to be a possible inheritor of slave trade business and the novel's portrayal of his emotional aspect in the letters to his wife is a response to how the black Atlantic experience affects the lives of the white people, as well. He is a figure who experiences the predicament of the two aspects of his life; responsibilities of continuing the business and having a family. The portrayal of another white character, the woman in Denver who helps Martha, can be seen as an instance of human engagement. As such, confusions are relevant to both sides. As Ledent claims, for Phillips remembering slavery has "nothing to do with redemption or catharsis" (*Caryl* 131). His aim in his retrieval of the memory of slavery is to make the reader rethink its consequences and to remind that history "has the nasty habit of repeating itself" (131). The persistence of the past still motivates certain ways of thinking as in the case of Edward, whose colonial mindset can be traced in today's racist discourse. Phillips says that Edward is a character that we can meet every day: "I see him [Edward] everyday, man, I see him if I go in the Arts Council, if I was ever to go near parliament, in every university; the professional patron" (qtd. in Ledent, *Caryl* 132). His ideology persists in today's societies. Thus, rather than demonizing the characters in his novel, Phillips foregrounds the sidelined memories as a force to make the reader reconsider the interconnections between seemingly disparate historical periods and ideologies.

The ending of the novel suggests that diaspora does not come from an essence or an idealised origin; just as in Gilroy's definition of diaspora, the connection among the members of the black diaspora is not bound to familial origins, or "essential blackness" (*Small* 99). It rather derives from the routes the characters take through their crossing of the river. This journey is traumatic as it is forced upon the individual and causes loss, but it is regenerative at the same time. In his interview with Davison, Phillips explains his aim in emphasizing such connections as follows:

> I wanted to make a connection between the African world which was left behind and the diasporan world which people had entered once they crossed the water. I wanted to make an affirmative connection, not a connection based

> upon exploitation or suffering or misery, but a connection based upon a kind of survival. ("Crisscrossing" 93)

While a family member might betray, a stranger might be a real family member as exemplified in the relationship between the father and the children and Joyce's joining the family. The father's words also suggest a hopeful future, as he says, they all "arrive on the far bank …loved" (237). The past causes pain and suffering, but it also connects diverse cultures and experiences through migratory trajectories, so the novel does not only deal with the past; it also looks to the future, new routes. Low states that in the novel "connection and kinship are performative rather than natural, earned rather than inherited" (139) because shared experiences are more efficient than familial ties and bloodline. The African father believes he can "rediscover his children" in the chorus of common memory. He hears them again in the black music as he reveals in the epilogue. Even though all the four sections share sad endings, the epilogue still refers, in a hopeful manner, to the voices of the African father's children scattered around the world: "their voices hurt but determined, they will survive the hardships of the far bank" (235). Through the dialogue initiated by the chorus of the common memory of Africa, the intertwined histories of the black Atlantic are revealed by transcultural memory and thereby enable the reader to reconsider the ignored aspects of history. Phillips complicates the received history because he believes that the past is "a highway to the present" ("A Home" 367) and "helps us understand where we are now" (371).

CHAPTER 4

TRANSCULTURAL MEMORY OF THE NATION THROUGH THE FIGURE OF THE REFUGEE: *A DISTANT SHORE*

Caryl Phillips's seventh novel *A Distant Shore* (2003), which received the 2004 Commonwealth Writers Prize, is his first fictional work that is set in contemporary Britain. Giving insight into the challenges of adapting to a new life as a result of forced displacement, the novel posits itself as a reminder of the consequences of Britain's exploitative relationship with Africa. Therefore, it can be considered a continuation to the story of the African siblings in *Crossing the River*. In his explorations of diaspora identity, Phillips expands the concept to revisit the history of slavery and colonialism that informs the essentialist and nativist approaches to identity. As demonstrated in this novel, what seems to be historical is in fact persistent in contemporary British society and has an influence on the current mindset, as well. In line with this, in *A Distant Shore*, Phillips deals with a still greatly topical concern, the refugee flow and animosity towards migrants. By drawing parallels between contemporary refugee movements and the Middle Passage, the novel connects the past with the present to lay bare the reasons why people from distant countries immigrate to Britain. The connection cannot be disregarded as Phillips reveals in an interview:

> One couldn't help but be aware of the debate about asylum seekers in Europe during the past few years. I noticed that a lot of the pejorative language used to describe them was similar to that applied to immigrants of my parents' generation. I've always felt that I would write a contemporary novel when the right subject-matter presented itself. And, of course, the right characters. I am still deeply committed to the notion of 'history' being the fundamental window through which we have to peer in order to see ourselves clearly. ("A Conversation" 2)

Accordingly, the novel focuses on the unlikely encounter between Solomon, an African refugee, whose real name is Gabriel, from an unspecified African country, and Dorothy, a white, retired teacher. Solomon and Dorothy become neighbours and a

friendship develops between them in a new housing development called Stoneleigh, which is located at the top of a hill near the fictional town of Weston, where the notions of belonging/unbelonging are established upon certain boundaries that ostracize those who are different. In this contemporary depiction of England, the sense of belonging is not solely related to the issues of race; Dorothy, as a white citizen, also feels lonely and detached. While Solomon is estranged from society because he is a black man, Dorothy is exorcized as she is a middle-aged divorcee who has mental health problems. Despite their different backgrounds, shared feelings of exclusion and loneliness bring them together. However, although Solomon's story seems to be carrying him from danger to safety, he is murdered by the racist youth in Weston, an embodiment of essentialized national identity. Reminiscent of the experience of the Middle Passage[26] and Britain's colonial conduct through Solomon's experience as a refugee and the atrocities in his homeland in Africa, the novel suggests that his journey is actually a part of the imperial legacy and Britain's transcultural memory.

Due to its focus on such topical concerns as the refugee movements, racism, and the sense of unbelonging, most of the critical attention the novel has received since its publication concentrates on Britain's position as a nation-state and the historical connections that create ambivalences and contradictions in its unity. Although some of these issues are recurrent subject matters in much of Phillips's re-imagining of the past, in *A Distant Shore* we can observe how the wounds inflicting the past and present lives of black people are still relevant in contemporary Britain. Focusing on the characters' shared feelings of unbelonging, Bénédicte Ledent deals with the question of national identity in the novel through the instances of "attachment and detachment" that characterize contemporary Britain ("Attachment" 152). In a similar vein, Stephen Clingman notes that the novel portrays a "nation of hidden narratives and glancing connections" that shape a "literature of fragmentation" ("England" 57). Dave Gunning also claims that the novel "must be read … as a 'British' text" since it is "located in a

[26] Several critics have analysed this parallelism. See Petra Tournay-Theodotou, "Strange Encounters: Nationhood and the Stranger in Caryl Phillips's *A Distant Shore*" (294); Thomas Bonnici, "Negotiating Inclusion in Caryl Phillips's *A Distant Shore*" (285); Jenny Sharpe, "The Middle Passages of Black Migration" (99); Elisabeth Bekers, "The Mirage of *Europe* in Caryl Phillips's *A Distant Shore* and Chika Unigwe's *On Black Sisters' Street*" (257).

fixed location with fixed codes and laws: the British nation" (38). Another critic Kasia Boddy pays particular attention to the setting of *A Distant Shore* that she sees as "a condition-of-England novel set in a Yorkshire village… a place which offers no hope to either of the two characters" (6). None of these insightful readings, however, involves memory research and pays attention to the transcultural memory of Britain that mainly comes to the fore with the refugee figure and complicates the notion of container cultures. Thus, drawing on these arguments, this chapter claims that Phillips's *A Distant Shore* uncovers the transcultural memory of the British nation and unsettles its claim for purity through the reminders of the imperial legacy. The exclusionary discourses that deny recognition to the outsiders and construct the boundaries of belonging are based on the collective memory that is shaped by the nationalist discourse of the country. In order to contest the nationalist discourse, the novel offers a transcultural perspective on the past and its role in identity construction both at individual and national levels by illustrating the cross-border reach of memories. To this end, it problematizes the idea of the homogeneous nation by drawing parallelisms between the Middle Passage and the refugee flow from Africa. Set against the claims for purity and decency of the people of Weston, Solomon's presence is a reminder of the atrocities of the imperial past that disturbs the idea of nation in their minds. This is achieved through the novel's employment of a variety of thematic and formal devices and narrative strategies. Thus, this chapter will also analyse how the narrative structure of the novel unravels the predicament of the two marginalised figures, Solomon and Dorothy. Phillips employs a mnemonic narrative strategy through the novel's fragmented structure and shifting narrative voice to demonstrate the movement of memory across cultural and national boundaries and how the past still persists in the present. As a consequence, he brings transcultural memory to the fore and broadens the narrow boundaries of the collective identity of Englishness to discover further possibilities and practices that shape this identity.

The novel progresses through the unfolding of the protagonists' memories, flashbacks to the events that bring them to Stoneleigh, switching between first and third-person narrations. The central plot-line moves through five narrative sections, alternating between the narratives of Dorothy and Solomon, and an extradiegetic

narrator. The first, third and last sections are about Dorothy's story, which functions as a frame narrative; the remaining parts are about Solomon. This criss-crossing of the storyline reflects the novel's concern with memory and Phillips's understanding of life that is "not necessarily a straight line but circular. Things that you thought you've left behind can come back and haunt you" ("I Prefer" 1). In line with this, the juxtaposition of different time periods and voices brings to the fore the effect of the past on the present; therefore, it can be claimed that transcultural memory is reflected in the structural schema of the novel. It emphasizes the entangled histories of the presumably distinct worlds. Memory of the empire and the civil wars in Africa run parallel to Solomon's memories and his present predicament as a refugee. Therefore, reworking the past in fractures not only sheds light on the memories of the characters but also uncovers the roots of the current problems in British society.

Phillips points out in his "Extravagant Strangers" that "Britain remains a country for whom a sense of continuity with an imagined past continues to be a major determinant of national identity" (296). Still informed by the imperial legacy of the late 16th and early 18th centuries, nativist discourses in Britain are based on appropriations of non-British peoples and regions to define Britishness. They seek to ignore the transcultural links and mnemonic movements of the peoples and cultures constituting the nation. When excluding "the others" from the community of the nation, however, such discourses also exclude and remove some parts of the national memory that involve the atrocities of the colonial conduct. Particularly, Britain's transcultural memory that involves the Middle Passage, exploitation of the colonies, and the post-war migration are set aside in the construction of such an identity of Britishness because ethnic diversity is deemed a threat to the nation's image (Gilroy, *After* 90). As a consequence, nativist discourses foster racism and hostility towards what is conceptualized as a threat to the nation's imagined homogeneous community. It is this inadequate representation of Britishness that Phillips unsettles in *A Distant Shore*. The emphasis on collectivity in nationalism is bound with the idea of container cultures that is characterized by "social homogenisation, ethnic consolidation and intercultural delimitation" (Welsch "Transculturality" 194). The nationalist communities as exemplified in the novel assume that "the nation-state is the natural

container … of collective memory" (De Cesari and Rigney 1). However, memory as a carrier of culture unsettles the notions of purity and homogeneity particularly in ethnically and culturally diverse societies that are largely shaped by migration. Migration is inexplicably linked with how memory travels across borders (Erll *Memory* 50). The constant change of locations brings along transcultural connections and memories. As Erll notes, "entangled histories … impinge on memories … and the complex migration patterns of the twentieth century have all led to a wealth of shared, transnational and transcultural sites of memory" ("Traumatic" 4). As such, migration is a challenge to the essentialist understanding of national identity because migrant memories carry along the sidelined history of the nation and offer a politically contested site to the imagined homogeneity of the nation. Set against the perceived versions of history, the accounts of slavery, migratory trajectories, and refugee flow all demonstrate a mnemonic space through which another aspect of the past is uncovered. Thus, memory functions to lay bare the inherent connectedness of identities that are products of historical and cultural processes.

The criss-crossing of the narrative line is the major tool used in the novel to trace the past and carve out the forgotten or ignored genealogies constituting the nation. In relation to the structure, Stephen Clingman states that Phillips is a "disrupter of national form" of the novel ("Other Voices" 128). Phillips himself explains the reason why he disrupts the structure as follows:

> I knew I had to disrupt form. Why? Because the stories I was going to tell, the people I was talking about, seemed to me to be people whose lives had been disrupted and didn't have a clear narrative continuity, because of migration, because of various forms of displacement. The second reason was that I was seeing historical connections, which didn't make any sense genealogically. You couldn't hold them in one plot. ("Other Voices" 128-9)

In this way, he pushes the reader to think out of the box and enhances their understanding of certain notions. The narrative line of the novel requires keen attention to details and parallelism between the events. The autodiegetic narrative of Dorothy in the opening section is interrupted by an extradiegetic narrator who gives an account of Gabriel's initial experience in England in the second part, without telling the reader that Gabriel is in fact Solomon. Shifting back and forth in time and suddenly

interrupted by a passage about Gabriel's experiences such as witnessing the slaughter of his parents and sisters during the war, the second part is partly narrated by Gabriel's internally focalized, autodiegetic narration, which is more encompassing and intimate:

> Gabriel hears the ship's engines falling quiet, and he notices that the lurching of the ship is becoming less violent. He hears people shouting to each other, and then the shouting becomes increasingly urgent. For a moment Gabriel wonders if this is the afterworld, and then he realises that it is his own name that is being shouted out. … We tried to do what was best for ourselves, and what was good for our young country. We wanted only to live in peace with our brothers, but it became clear that this was not possible. … Father did not know how to cope with this new situation, and there were portions of his cheek that he had forgotten to shave. (121-22)

His first-person account of the past is embedded into the extradiegetic narrator's present tense account of Gabriel's journey to Britain. Solomon's death in the first section and the revelation of Gabriel's identity at the end of the second section complete each other in the sense that first two parts of the novel reveal the horror the refugee has to endure. The third part is given again by an extradiegetic narrator, focusing on Dorothy's recollections after her divorce, and then in the fourth part, Solomon, as an autodiegetic narrator, tells us about his arrival in Stoneleigh, switching between his memories of the Andersons, a couple who open their house to him, and his more recent past in England, until the moment he decides to speak to Dorothy about who he really is. The last part of the novel, which is the briefest, involves the stream of consciousness of Dorothy who is in a mental institution. By discarding authorial narrative and fixed narrative modes, this diversity of perspectives offers the reader different angles to evaluate the subject matter. Phillips undermines the imagined past fostered by essentialist narratives of the nation by juxtaposing it with the marginalized events in history and laying bare its present consequences through the fractal narrative of the novel. As such, the thematic features of the novel contribute to the shaping of a narrative that is transgressive and disruptive. Clingman considers the fractured form of *A Distant Shore* as mirroring "transnational faultlines within national space" (*The Grammar* 94). Uncovering the transnational or the transcultural, the narrative structure of the novel juxtaposes the shifting boundaries of temporal lines through Solomon's journey. Reworking the past goes beyond narrating the former lives of the characters;

by retracing the consequences of colonialism, it revives the lost moments that are discarded in collective memory. Gilroy claims that it is the routes rather than the roots that shape new subjectivities and that the routes complicate the notion of a fixed identity as it refers to an experience always in a process and cannot be represented in a unitary, linear narrative (*The Black Atlantic* 198). In this sense, the nonlinearity of the plot both illustrates the identity negotiation of the protagonist and runs up against the notions of essentialist national cultures. In doing so, the narrative itself challenges the paradigm of collective memory that contains the imagined memories of the dominant group, the community of Weston, in the novel. Contrary to the divisive borders that define cultural and national belonging, Halbwachs contends that "[t]he collective memory is a record of resemblances and, naturally, is convinced that the group remains the same" (*The Collective* 86). Weston community, thus, imagines a stable, shared past of purity and homogeneity that is formed in the collective memory of the town. However, the novel demonstrates that no community is pure or homogeneous by reminding the reader of Britain's involvement with colonial practices and referring to the link between imperial history and contemporary violence and intolerance in society. Weston community turns a blind eye to the transcultural links and memories by marginalizing individuals they deem different and denies their influences within the British culture. Resisting this understanding, the novel foregrounds transcultural memory by interweaving nonlinear fragments of past and present.

Before venturing into an analysis of the characters, it is necessary to explore how the novel draws attention to the historical dimension of contemporary refugee and race politics. The first decade of the twenty-first century is marked by a reconsideration of the issues of ethnic and cultural diversity. According to Edward Said, "all cultures are involved in one another; none is single and pure, all are hybrid, heterogeneous, extraordinarily differentiated, and unmonolithic" (*Culture* xxix). Similarly, Phillips defines the century as "[a] world in which it is impossible to resist the claims of the migrant, the asylum seeker, or the refugee" and contends that "[i]n this new world order nobody will feel fully at home. … we are all being dealt an ambiguous hand, one which may eventually help us to accept the dignity which

informs the limited participation of the migrant, the asylum seeker, or the refugee." (*A New* 5-6). In a century of shifting boundaries and global networks of communication anyone might be a migrant or refugee. This characteristic of our age finds resonance in the narrative of the mobility across boundaries. What Phillips conceptualizes is in line with Welsch's definition of transculturality, according to which, culture is inherently porous and cannot be distinguished along clearly defined lines ("Transculturality" 197). As cultures permeate into one another, the traditional understanding of container cultures is bound to disappear. In a century of shifting boundaries and global networks of communication, people of Weston are not informed about Solomon's arrival in England as a refugee. He just appears as a black man whose past is unknown and unquestioned just as the transcultural connections between Britain and Africa. Likewise, the African country Solomon flees from is deliberately unspecified as it is not significant in a racist community which categorizes him as an outsider because of his skin colour. Throughout the novel, Solomon's hometown remains unknown, which makes his story symbolic of various immigrants searching for a new life in Britain. Liza Schuster, in her "Unmixing Migrants and Refugees," notes that it is "difficult to distinguish neatly between migrants, asylum seekers and refugees" (297). Similarly, in the introduction to *Oxford Handbook of Refugee and Forced Migration Studies*, Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh et al. state that the answer to the questions of "[w]ho a refugee is and how we can define and understand forced migration" remains elusive (9). Phillips portrays Solomon as a character who starts his life in Britain as a refugee and then gets asylum and begins to live in the neighbourhood as an outsider about whom townspeople know nothing. Therefore, in this study the refugee figure will be considered as standing for forced migration because Solomon has to escape from his African hometown; he is not a voluntary migrant but he is informed about the advantages and benefits of living in Britain and gets the legal status to live there after a while.

The refugee flow from economically and politically troubled locations to the allegedly civilized West is one of the topical issues the novel deals with. Decolonized Africa is still plagued by a disastrous historical process and political unrest. The civil wars in Solomon's hometown are the consequences of a disastrous historical process

of colonial exploitation of labour and natural resources. As Henderson and Singer report, "[s]ince 1945, most wars have occurred within rather than between states, and most of these civil wars have taken place in the former colonies of the imperial powers. As we begin the 21st century, the violence in these post-colonial states is among the most pressing problems in world politics" (275). *A Distant Shore* echoes these problems in its treatment of Solomon/Gabriel as a refugee haunted by the traumatic memories of the atrocities in Africa. Referring to the political unrest in former colonies, Blanton et al. point out that "[w]ith the demise of colonial rule, the former colonies, with their colonial borders, essentially intact, were transformed into some of the most ethnically fragmented states in the world" (473). This fragmentation is evident in the conflict that causes the civil war in Gabriel's country. As his flashbacks reveal, he was a government clerk before joining the rebels and becoming a soldier in his country's liberation army against the government troops. One member of his tribe becomes the president but the former power holders attempt a military coup and the war begins. As Gabriel remembers, the conflict is based on economic factors and the division between the old and new order:

> We were the smaller tribe. We worked hard and we did not harm anybody. … My father told me that they were jealous of us, for our people ran many businesses; not just in the capital city, but in our tribal land in the south. We formed the backbone of the economy, and therefore we had much influence. It was only after one of our people was elected to the presidency that the real trouble began; the killings. The army rebelled, and the government troops spilled out from their barracks and cruised the streets in vehicles with machine guns… My job as a messenger clerk was to run errands for civil servants and ministers in the government; I worked for the type of men who drove large foreign cars and who travelled freely to Europe and even to the United States. I would take them an envelope, or a pot of soup, or a new cell phone … In this way I hoped to gain influence and to one day secure for myself a position as a junior civil servant. This is how the system worked in my country. (122-23)

They have fixed notions of belonging, as illustrated by the division of us and them, and are ready to fight against those who do not belong in their tribe. It is implied in the novel that one of the ethnic minority groups, former rulers of the country, rebels against the ones who currently hold the power. Gabriel's father urges him to join the rebels: "You must go now. You are my only son and it is my duty to send you to the liberation army" he says (138), and Gabriel begins to lead a rebellious group of militias

as Major Hawk, known for his fierceness. After witnessing his own family's murder, he thinks to himself: "I must leave. … This is not my home anymore" (88). He kills his friend and former employer Felix to get the money for his own escape, and with the help of his uncle, who gets involved with human trafficking charging large amounts, he manages to flee Africa. These memories of a refugee and the corruption involved in African political atmosphere are brought to the fore with the arrival of Solomon and other refugees, which suggests that Britain is a "nation of hidden narratives and glancing connections" (Clingman, "England" 57) in which the boundaries determining categories such as culture and nation are already crossed and re-crossed through transnational connections.

Memories of British colonial conduct in Africa move across the Atlantic alongside the refugees. Through references to the corruption involved in Africa's political atmosphere, the novel brings to mind the consequences of colonialism and suggests that Britain's imperial legacy is still alive and circulates through the movement of the refugees. In order to illustrate this movement of the transcultural memory of Britain Phillips uses imagery evocative of the experience of the Middle Passage. The first part of the refugees' journey is in the back of an overcrowded and unsafe truck:

> As the engine roars to life, Gabriel realizes that, trussed as they are like cargo, this first part of their journey is not going to be pleasant. He can feel the dampness of other men's perspiring bodies, and it is not possible to distinguish whose arm or leg is pressing up against him. (84)

Yet, Gabriel is hopeful about the future as "life is taking him beyond this nightmare and to a new place and a new beginning'' (84). Then his journey from Africa takes him with other refugees first to a destination in Eastern Europe; and from there they are loaded on bus to a refugee camp in France; finally, they move across the channel to England by clinging to the side of a cargo ship. And then they have to plunge into the water swimming to the shore. As mentioned before, Gabriel's journey to England and the hardships he endures are reminiscent of the experience of the Middle Passage of the slaves across the Atlantic. Moreover, like the slave traders, the uniformed white men who organize their escape are only concerned about money and "look upon them without respect" (89). The novel also redefines the traditional symbolic white cliffs

and shores of England in dark colours that disappoint the refugees. The choice of vocabulary such as "black water", "cargo" and "a large tubular warehouse" (99), and the misfortunes such as the falling down of one of the refugees during the journey, and crossing of the channel are all reminiscent of the Middle Passage. Apparently, Phillips historicizes the situation by forming links between the transatlantic slave trade and the refugee flow of the twenty-first century and deaths at sea. As such, the novel illustrates migration as a "carrier" of memory and "and narratives of the past" ("Erll "Travelling" 12). The history of slavery is a constituent of the nation and a part of what Rothberg conceptualizes as the "heterogeneous … memory cultures that were there all along but never entered into dominant understandings of the past" (*Multidirectional* 358). As such, memory contests the national amnesia. With migration flows, memories of the connection between Africa and Britain challenge the purity of national memory assumed by the people of Weston.

Not only the civil conflict and the perilous journey of the African refugees across Europe, but also their expectations about England and fluency in English suggest that the unnamed African country is a former colony of the British Empire. Solomon is a forced migrant but he is informed about the advantages of living in Britain. The first thing noticeable about him and his fellow refugees is their fluency in English, and one of them, Bright, identifies himself as an Englishman. He believes that England is a better place to fulfil his dreams:

> I am an Englishman. … If you cut my heart open you will find it stamped with the word "England." I speak the language, therefore I am going to England to claim my house and my stipend. … I know we have all been afflicted, but I, this man, cannot go back ever. I hate it. I want to forget Africa and those people. I am an Englishman now. I am English and nobody will stop me from going home. Not you, not these people, nobody. (134)

Bright's dreams of an ideal England are soon to be shattered. The novel contests the image of England as a safe haven and a civilized country as well as the old illusion of the mother country as a better place. The refugees who attempt to cross the channel with Gabriel hope for a better life and imagine Britain as a land that is welcoming and full of opportunities. At first, they expect to be welcomed in a hospitable land. Gabriel tries to convince another refugee at the camp in France: "But you must try and reach

England. They are friendly and will give you food and shelter" (118). In contrast to their expectations, when Gabriel and two other refugees reach the coastline, they are disappointed by the scene: "[t]he ship is approaching a coastline that looks like a long, thin black shadow decorated with speckles of white light, … the sea water is burning his eyes. He can see that Bright is gesturing wildly to him, but there is no sign of the other man. (136). The first thing Gabriel notices with regard to England is loneliness. He thinks to himself: "[t]his is not the England that he thought he was traveling to, and these shipwrecked people are not the people that he imagined he would discover" (155). This scene is followed by a future scene that depicts Gabriel in an immigration cell where he is sedated on a filthy bed. He is falsely accused of sexually assaulting a girl and sent to prison. As such, the novel undermines the notion of England as a safe place of freedom. Phillips addresses this disenchantment in his earlier novels, as well. In *The Final Passage,* Leila observes the people on the streets who "look sad and cold" (121) and in *A State of Independence* Bertram moves from England back to the Caribbean because of the bitter disappointment he feels in England. When Gabriel is taken by the police van, he observes the streets through the window: "[I]t is strange, but nobody is looking at anybody else, and it would appear that not only are these people all strangers to one another, but they seem determined to make sure that this situation will remain unchanged" (163). This threatening atmosphere of England is registered in the imagery of darkness. Gabriel's fellow prisoner Said, an illegal immigrant from Iraq, is disappointed in the mother country: "The light in England is very weak. It depresses me. They have taken the sun out of the sky" (71). As a former teacher in Iraq, he can speak English and just because he expresses his wish to seek asylum on the train "to some English people" (69) he is accused of robbing them and sent to jail. "I am a human being," he says, "who has paid over United States dollars three thousand, everything that I have, to come from my country in a small space under a truck" (69). He thought in "England they will give [him] money and some kind of voucher and let [him] work" (70). But then he joins many other disillusioned immigrants who believe in the welcoming image of Britain and become disappointed when they realize this is not true. Said is an outsider because of his ethnicity, and dies of neglect in prison. His depiction of England signifies a gloomy and threatening

atmosphere that does not offer refuge or safety. Throughout the novel, Britain is represented as a hostile and distant land. Similarly, Mahmood, who is an immigrant from India, is disillusioned by the hostility of England. With the hope of a better life for his family, he leaves India to escape from the cultural traditions he does not like to follow, but he faces prejudice and racism in England. Mahmood never encounters the kind of civility and decency he has expected to see in English society. He quits working at Indian restaurants in England and decides to run a local newsagent because

> [he]could no longer stomach the disrespectful confusion of running a restaurant. The sight of fat-bellied Englishmen and their slatterns rolling into The Khyber Pass after the pubs had closed, calling him Ranjitt or Baboo or Swamp Boy, and using poppadoms as Frisbees, and demanding lager, and vomiting in his sinks, and threatening him with his own knives and their beery breath … was causing Mahmood to turn prematurely grey. (179-80)

The novel connects the past and the present with these stories of the minority groups in contemporary Britain. The racist attitude of the British is part of a contemporary world connected to the imperial history. In other words, Gabriel's emergence as a refugee on the shores of England is a consequence of the disruptions that had been caused by the imperial practices. And such practices have considerable influence on the current lives of immigrants. Philips intermingles seemingly separate narratives in order to show the connectedness of such experiences. The atrocities in Gabriel's homeland and the racist attitude the migrants encounter are part of a contemporary world connected to the imperial history. Solomon's presence and indirectly the presence of the black diaspora in Britain is also a consequence of the disruptions caused by the colonial practices. Therefore, the novel illustrates the reasons for migration and refugee flow by referring to the material and political consequences of colonialism.

In addition to the conditions of his crossing, Solomon's position as a lonely, illegal immigrant in a hostile setting causes a rupture in his life, which is also mirrored in the fractal narrative of the novel. With regard to this, Clingman contends that the novel demonstrates Phillips's general interest "in all those asymmetrically marginalised and excluded people of whatever origins whose paths cross in ways that shift from the complex and complementary to the jagged, tangential and disjunctive –

in itself an underlying formal patterning of his work" ("England" 46). It is the complex experience of border-crossing that transforms Gabriel into Solomon. This complexity is a part of transcultural experience that is projected into the narrative through shifts in time and narrative voice. Solomon's story ends with his murder mentioned in Dorothy's narrative in the first part. However, at the end of the second part, which is all about Gabriel, it is revealed that Solomon is in fact Gabriel who has changed his name, at the suggestion of a social worker, to start a new life. After we read about how Solomon dies, the next part of the novel starts with Gabriel's story without a clue that he is in fact Solomon. His journey across the Atlantic reconstructs his identity through a continuing exchange of cultures. The routes of this journey strip him not only of his former self but also form a new identity that binds various experiences. On the one hand, his memories provide a refuge from his present unfortunate situation; on the other, in order to reconstruct his identity, he thinks he needs to "learn to banish all thought of his past existence" (94). In the construction of migrant identities, the past plays an important role. Gabriel constantly feels the dilemma between his old self and his new position as a refugee. Retracing the past is a way of dealing with marginalization and exile as well as drawing new paths for survival. While he feels strong when he remembers his former identity as a soldier, he tries to forget his past to make a successful transition to his new life and live up to his current position in Stoneleigh. His dreams and memories disrupt the main narrative by drawing attention to the traumatic past and sense of unbelonging. As Phillips states in an interview conducted by Elvira Pulitano:

> [t]he asylum seekers, in particular, have migration forced upon them. It doesn't involve chains, it doesn't involve manacles, it doesn't involve physically brutal labor, but the psychological trauma can fester for years. These are not economic migrants who have bought a ticket. Europe is full of people who are psychologically scarred, having cut the umbilical cord with their countries and their languages, as viciously and as traumatically as people did in the past with slavery. ("Migrant" 378)

While he holds on to his memories of being a powerful and dignified man in his homeland, his new identity as an immigrant leads him to feel lonely and detached. As Yuval-Davis notes, belonging is "an act of self-identification or identification by others" and it requires "emotional attachments to various collectivities and groupings"

(199). Solomon cannot identify with any collectivities because he feels uprooted in a hostile space. As a refugee, he is a fragmented subject; he feels belonging neither here nor there. Phillips introduces Solomon as a figure of loss and homelessness. His memories are mixed with his current fears and nightmares as he is haunted by the traumatic memories:

> I remembered my father and my sisters being shot like animals. My dreams contained my history. Night and day I tried not to think of these things any more. I tried not to think of these people anymore. I wanted to set these people free so that they might become people in another man's story. … I was a coward who had trained himself to forget. (297)

Especially in his first days in England, his former identity is in conflict with the current one. The shifts given in his memories imply that the process of identity construction is subject to many different forces. Apart from his status as a refugee, Solomon faces racial prejudice, which makes things even worse for him. When he asks for some water in the detention centre, the night warder responds: "Drink your own piss. Isn't that what you lot do in the jungle?" (86). After he is released from prison, with the help of an Irish lorry driver, he meets the Andersons, who help him apply for political asylum and settle in Stoneleigh. But he is not welcome there, either; he is sent hate mails, which threaten him with death, some razor blades, and dog excrement in his letterbox, which he considers "savage" (300). Although his story seems to be carrying him from danger to safety, he cannot survive the racism and demarginalization and his body is found in a canal.[27] The novel juxtaposes Solomon's memories of Africa and his experience in England to lay bare the transcultural connections within the national history. The temporal fractions within the narrative display the existence of the past within the present. Consequently, the novel's critique of prescribed notions of belonging goes beyond digging up the imperial history to reflect the transcultural links between the past and the contemporary circumstances. The traumatic experience initiated by the war in Solomon's country is multiplied as a consequence of the horror inflicted upon him. His being arrested, the attitude of the guards towards him, the

[27] Gabriel/Solomon's murder and being dumped in a canal recalls the racist killing of the Nigerian migrant David Oluwale by the Leeds City Police Force in the River Aire in 1969. Phillips recounts the real-life story of Oluwale in his work *Foreigners: Three English Lives* (2007).

prejudice of the lawyers who are just "trying to establish dates, not state of mind" (101), and the threatening letters in Stoneleigh are all caused by the blatant racism in the host country in which he feels stuck:

> I could not return to my country, for there was nothing for me to return to. I possessed no family. Each time I opened my eyes I heard Mum crying. I was a coward who had trained himself to forget. I accepted from people. From Mr and Mrs Anderson. I was no longer 'Hawk'. I was no longer my mother's Gabriel. It was Solomon who learned of Mike's death. It was Solomon who was lying in a warm bed in a strange room among these kind people. It was Solomon. I was Solomon. (297)

Reshaping his identity according to the circumstances surrounding him makes him once again realize the loss and trauma of displacement. Because of his traumatic experiences both in Africa and England, he finds it very difficult to communicate his painful memories. He chooses silence because the circumstances are not available for him to articulate the complexity of his story. In relation to his silence, McLeod states that

> [i]n the transcultural contact zone of our global contemporaneity, silence does not signify absence or failure. In concert with the conversational imperatives of living in a world of strangers, the anxious silences of the contact zone mark a non-verbal process of understanding in which that yearning to engage hospitably with others is inflected with a consciousness of the limits of one's standpoint, of the incommensurability of those who exist like us. ("Sounding" 11)

In view of this, Solomon's silence is the "writer's attempt to sound the silence of a transcultural world" (11). The failed attempt of the protagonists to share their stories "engenders the possibility of a significant soundless understanding" (11). Dorothy sees a reflection of her own loneliness in Solomon's inability to share his painful memories. Thus, silence becomes a common ground that provides a transcultural link between the two. This mutual understanding allows them to cross socially and politically determined borders, such as race, nationality, gender, and age.

Transcultural memory functions as an analytical lens in the recognition of the interplay between global and local forces. The encounter of such different figures as Dorothy and Solomon in the same neighbourhood represents the transformation in social relations as a consequence of global effects. Through their attempts to forge a

connection across the established boundaries between their statuses, Solomon and Dorothy's friendship begins with their awareness of each other's loneliness. When Solomon first sees Dorothy, he thinks "[s]he appears lonely" (293). Similarly, looking out her window, Dorothy watches Solomon polishing his car and observes "this lonely man…with a concentration that suggests that a difficult life is informing the circular motion of his right hand. His every movement would appear to be an attempt to erase a past that he no longer wishes to be reminded of. She looks at him and she understands" (237). Their connection is mainly based on their shared inability to deal with painful memories and acknowledgement of their loneliness. They sometimes have a cup of tea together, and Solomon offers driving Dorothy to her appointments with her doctor. After he drives her into the town on several occasions, they begin to draw the attention of the townspeople. People watch Dorothy behind their windows, gossiping about her connection with Solomon. The hostility of the townspeople towards Dorothy marks the other key axis of the narrative. For instance, Mrs. Lawson, mother of Dorothy's student Carla, stares at her "with a piteous look" and says "you should get some help as you're behaving strangely" (20). The town is resistant to global encounters but it is not only about race; otherness is also determined by categories such as gender, class, and even marital status. Phillips places more emphasis on the issue of identity in this work than he does on racial prejudice in his previous works. He explains this in an interview:

> I'm more concerned with 'identity' than with 'race.' The latter is just one component in the former, along with religion, gender, nationality, class, etc. This is obviously a novel about the challenged identity of two individuals, but it's also a novel about English – or national – identity. ("A Conversation" 23)

To emphasize the role of such exclusionary categories in the construction of national identity, he juxtaposes Solomon's trauma of displacement with Dorothy's estrangement from her homeland. With regard to the effect of the novel's illustration of different kinds of belonging, McCluskey contends that "it undermines the various proportions of place-based loyalty, with the signifier 'home' being deliberately interrogated to promote an open, fluid, and, indeed, cosmopolitan vision of human belonging" (25). The disparate experiences of the characters are evocative of an inclusive vision that seeks to overcome established categories of identity.

Significantly, Tournay–Theodotou also considers the characters as "a clear sign of the writer's awareness of the connection between the equally oppressive sexual and (post)colonial politics, and of his wish to give a voice to those not represented in official or grand narratives and to provide an intimate view of their plight" ("Strange" 294). Phillips provides both characters with some traits to represent a discourse of displaced subject. Dorothy understands Solomon's loneliness because although she is a British citizen and comes from a larger town close to Weston, she is on the margins, too. Although her story is different, her search for refuge makes her feel closer to Solomon. Her psychological distress develops as a consequence of her traumatic past and her failing strength to overcome those events. She is betrayed by her husband and gets divorced. She has a relationship with a married man, Mahmood, who leaves her. Then she moves to Stoneleigh after being accused of harassing a male colleague, Geoff, and is forced into early retirement. Her parents and only sister Sheila die, and, as it is underscored throughout the novel, her story is marked by desolation and social isolation. When she meets Solomon, who has no friends, their shared state of mind connects them as Solomon thinks to himself: "This is a woman to whom I might tell my story" (266). Although he has received help from some other people so far, it is the first time that he considers talking about his suppressed memories. But he is murdered before he has the opportunity to share his story with Dorothy. After the racist killing of Solomon, Dorothy begins to realize the consequences of racism in the community that initiates her negotiation of identity at the same time: "I haven't given it much thought, and perhaps this is my failing. In the town there are plenty of dark faces, but in this village he's alone. And maybe he feels alone" (45). Through this connection, the novel offers an insight into how identities can change through such unlikely encounters and challenges predominant ways of engaging with the past in a limited community.

The disruptions caused by the imperial history still affect the lives of the diasporic community. When Gabriel arrives in London, he meets a fellow countryman Emmanuel, who upon Gabriel's telling the name of his country, opens his arms wide and says: "My brother, I cannot believe this. I have been here in England for so long and now I am finally with a countryman" (153). However, pretending to help Gabriel,

Emmanuel steals his money and escapes. Neither of them mentions the name of the country. This can be explained on the basis of Gabriel's unwillingness to claim his past as he has committed war crimes and it may be dangerous for him to align with his former national identity. Another instance where he feels betrayed by his ethnic group is his uncle's exploiting him when he needs his help to escape from the country. Rather than the British citizens he meets when he first arrives in England, such as Katherine and Denise, his relatives and other immigrants disappoint Gabriel. The disappearance of Bright, a fellow refugee, on the shore, the death of his cellmate, and the betrayal of Emmanuel detach him further from the diasporic community, which offers no refuge. In this way, the novel undermines the founding myth based on ethnic unity, rootedness, and homeland that celebrate an imagined collectivity among the members of the African diaspora. Instead, Phillips focuses on social relations and feelings of unbelonging that build a connection among individuals.

For Gilroy, the black Atlantic experience goes beyond ethnicity and nationality to produce the dynamism of diaspora culture. With its emphasis on going beyond borders and national identifications, transcultural memory is effective in challenging the role of boundaries in defining and containing identity. Likewise, the novel undermines the approaches that inform exclusive notions of belonging by demonstrating that identity is not a fixed entity; rather it is fluid, incessantly transforming, and incomplete. The protagonists negotiate with their own plurality of identities as the novel is preoccupied with memory as a bridge between a new life as routes and an untold past as roots. Illustrating how Solomon redefines his identity by attempting to revisit the past, the novel offers a transcultural perspective on memory and its role in identity construction. Solomon's memories remain but his experience and the new culture he lives in lead him to take new routes. His loneliness is strengthened by the fact that he cannot speak his own language anymore: "My only real regret was the lack of anybody from my own country with whom I might talk. My language was drying up in my mouth, and sometimes, when nobody was around, I would place my language on my tongue and speak some words so that I could be sure that I was still in possession of it" (253). Yet, he knows that he should leave the past behind: "I have only this one year to my life. I am a one-year-old man who walks with

heavy steps. I am a man burdened with hidden history" (266). He is gradually adapting himself to the change, his new identity as Solomon, feeling that if he were to return to his homeland, he would not fit in there again. However, especially during his first days in England, he thinks he cannot completely fit into British society. He feels vulnerable, as he reflects, "[a]t home it was relatively simple to distinguish a man of a different tribe or region, but among these people I was lost. … my lack of knowledge of the ways of the English caused me to be fearful" (243). Also, as a former soldier he feels shame now for being repressed and because of the charges of sexual assault. His identity is disputed by what he experiences in his new sense of self. He thinks to himself when he faces the racist youths: "They do not know who I am. I am the son of an elder, a man who decided disputes and punished crimes … I am a man who has survived, and I would rather die like a free man than suffer my blood to be drawn like a slave's" (251). He gradually grows distant from his former life and begins to evaluate himself from the other's perceptions. He does not long to return to his roots, which he comes to see as an imaginary homeland. His being frauded by a countryman and receiving help from only white people also reveals that he has no notion of a comradeship with other members of the black community. Thus, both the loss of his former identity and ties with the past and the transformation brought about by his new life reconstruct who he is. In view of this, the novel underscores "the instability and mutability of identities which are always unfinished, always being remade" (Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic* xi). As a refugee, Gabriel is both the victim of the war during which his family is murdered before his eyes, and the persecutor of violence as a rebel commander in Africa. His constant change of status refers to multiple crossings of borders and transformation of identity. Therefore, he crosses national and cultural as well as geographical borders. The connection between his former life and new status in the host country is emphasized through his memories, which not only form an individual link to his present life but also function as a bridge between current migration flows and Britain's imperial past. As such, memory and its transcultural aspect play a significant role both in constructing diasporic identity and providing a perspective to evaluate the legacy of colonial history. In this way, the novel engages with transcultural memory to demonstrate the plurality of identity and how the

protagonists reconstruct their identities. Identities do not depend on one single essence that provides a basis for personality. The novel's shifts from one narrator to another also illustrates the multiplicity of identity. Throughout the novel both Dorothy and Solomon go through a process that changes their points of view.

By bridging the gap between past and present through memory, the novel also exposes the us/them dichotomy and hierarchy in British society that denies its transcultural connections and inherent heterogeneity. This inherent heterogeneity of nation is reflected in the history of Weston. The townspeople believe in an ethnically bounded narrative of the nation and display overt racism resisting multiplicity in town. However, the fractured nature of nation, which is in contrast to how Weston community conceptualizes it, is mirrored by the fragmented narrative in the novel. Clingman identifies the fragmented structure as mirroring the critique of the nation as "far from cohesive, horizontally unified, or identical" ("England" 51). The novel draws a portrait of the nation as an entity which is highly affected by the residues of the past. The nation is not only disrupted by the transcultural connections remembered by Solomon. Early in the novel, the "multidirectional memories" (Rothberg) of World War II and the colonial era are referred to when Dorothy reads the road-sign by the entrance of Weston. Accordingly, as Dorothy states, Weston is

> twinned with some town in Germany and a village in the south of France. In the estate agent's bumf about 'Stoneleigh' it says that during the Second World War the German town was bombed flat by the RAF, and the French village used to be full of Jews who were all rounded up and sent to the camps. I can't help feeling that it makes Weston seem a bit tame by comparison. (4)

Ironically, Weston is very far from being "tame" because violence still persists and is normalized by the townspeople. The novel contests the view that what happens outside the borders of Britain is irrelevant to British history. Rather, the global crises such as wars and displacements play a crucial role in the construction of the nation.

In a similar vein, Solomon and Dorothy's unusual friendship can be interpreted as an attempt to disrupt nativist narratives. Solomon can be considered as representing the black diaspora and Dorothy as the representative of British citizens who are socially estranged from their homeland. The novel starts with Dorothy's following remarks: "England has changed. These days it's difficult to tell who's from around

here and who's not. Who belongs and who's a stranger. It's disturbing. It doesn't feel right" (3). She cannot tell who belongs and who does not, because, as a "native" citizen, she, too, considers herself a stranger. Yet, Dorothy is the one who acknowledges this change and that is why she is not welcome in Weston. Her acknowledgement of the change and acquaintance with Solomon can be seen as an act of crossing racial and social boundaries and validates Dorothy's statement that England has changed. Given their different experiences and backgrounds, the unusual acquaintance informs the disruption of national narratives and offers a valuable insight into the transcultural direction of the novel. In a rural environment like Weston, which is an old mining town, obviously, none of the villagers is pleased with the term "new development" (3). Weston is a small place representing the northern rural areas of England where the population largely identifies with exclusivist national identity. However, Stoneleigh, located "on the edge of Weston" (3) as a recently-built place, is a more middle-class environment and populated with "new" people. In a way, its claim to change or progress is set against the locality of Weston. In this respect, since the story is set in a provincial English town, it can be held that the novel functions as a representative of cultural processes that reveal transcultural realities even in such conservative places. In other words, while collective memory shaped by nativist discourses is still alive, the voice of the marginalized figures creates an alternative to the imagined past of Weston. In doing so, the novel makes the reader consider the possible points of contact and connection between historical and contemporary dimension of race politics. The townspeople have specific cultural and national boundaries in their minds which have been developed by the collective memory that is formed by the surrounding social frameworks of Weston. The binaries within the community that cause people like Solomon and Dorothy to be ostracized can be explained on the basis of Gilroy's concept of camp mentality. Gilroy defines the national "camp mentality" as "constituted by appeals to race, nation, and ethnic difference" (*Between Camps* 83). Modern nation-states constitute camps, be it racial, religious, national, cultural, to organize who belongs and who does not. This mentality works to make a division between groups by rejecting the inclusion of diasporic groups on the ground of drawing cultural borders of national purity and absolutism. In the

established "camp" of Weston, the exclusivist attitude of the villagers is also evident in the protagonists' inability to feel at home. In her *Cartographies of Diaspora*, Avtar Brah refers to the concept of home that is established upon the boundaries of segregation and belonging. She contends that the "question of home … is intrinsically linked with the way in which processes of inclusion or exclusion operate and are subjectively experienced under given circumstances. It is centrally about our political and personal struggles over the social regulation of 'belonging'" (189). Her view is in line with Gilroy's emphasis on routes that embody a more fluid understanding of identity. An insistence on the relationship of belonging with roots and rootedness hinders the expansion of identities to transgress the presumably impermeable borders of class, race, gender and nation. These borders and divisions between the old and the new become particularly evident when one of the villagers refers to the new residents as "the newcomers, or posh so-and sos" (5) viewing them with suspicion, and Dorothy in turn refers to the woman as "vulgar" (5). Dorothy thinks to herself: "So our village is divided into two" (4). As this incident suggests, class, indicated by the place of residence, is also foregrounded as a category defining belonging. The resistance to welcome the outsider or the newcomer is valid even for fellow citizens because any attempt to contest the shared past and way of life is considered a threat. As a reminder of this, Dorothy is told by the postman "that he had been instructed by the head office to scratch out the name 'Stoneleigh' if it appeared on any envelopes. Should the residents turn out to be persistent offenders, then he was to politely remind them that they lived in Weston" (4). So, they consider what is new as an intrusion to their imagined unity. But Weston community is already an internally fractured community. Tournay-Theodotou considers this "us/them" dichotomy as evocative of "the tension between a conservative essentialist Britain with its inability to accommodate change [and] the demands of a society in flux" ("Strange" 296). Essentialist narratives of nation as a homogenous community require the continuity of its values. Thus, anything that creates dissonance is attempted to be kept outside. However, throughout the novel, Phillips posits Britain as a heterogenous nation in that even a small town is divided into two as newcomers and the old villagers. They have an image of imaginary homeland which is homogenous but the novel constantly deconstructs this image by

emphasizing its imaginary aspect. The image the townspeople draw for themselves is challenged by the cultural plurality the novel pictures through the presence of ethnic minorities or marginalized groups such as the Jews, gypsies, and homeless people who live in Weston. Further diversity of cultural origins is evident in the Andersons' Scottish origins and their adopted son Mike, who is of Irish origin. The novel exposes the complexities of the flickering concept of belonging/unbelonging of the "outsiders" as they are also part of the nation. In doing so, Phillips offers a fictional layer to what might be missing in traditional historical accounts. What links these people is the experience of being ostracized by nationalist discourses. By positioning this multiplicity in suburban England that clings to an imaginary homogeneity, Phillips challenges the myth of the purity of nation and shows how the townspeople ignore the global influences in their region by attempting to form a collective memory which is nourished by national essentialism.

Solomon makes no claim to nationhood, but his coming from a former colony and being murdered by the so-called "civilized" English citizens allow the novel to critically engage with the deconstruction of the hegemonic nationalist narrative epitomized by Weston. Solomon's presence forces Weston, or symbolically England, to remember its imperial past since his is one of the many sidelined memories of the nation. The emphasis on change in the opening statement of the novel suggests the dissolution of the stable English identity in the new transnational society, represented by Stoneleigh. Di Maio also suggests that the Weston community is "symbolic of the nation" (257). Likewise, as Tournay-Theodotou puts it, Weston stands for "miniature spatial allegories of the nation at large" ("Strange" 296). In this sense, Solomon can be considered as a representative of the immigrant population in Britain. As for Dorothy, she "embodies the dislocation of a person who is in her own home without feeling at home" (Bonnici 287). In a similar manner, Di Maio argues that Weston represents "an England that has yet to come to terms with the fact that its million non-whites have contributed to the shaping of its national identity, and which is a part of a larger Europe" (251). Therefore, immigration emerges in the novel as a defining feature of the country. Furthermore, the pretence of decency and purity of the Weston community falls apart with the murder of Solomon. To be more precise, the violence

inflicted on the Other in the past continues in the present in some altered forms. The persecutors of this violence always belong to a community that promotes singularity of culture and a homogenous understanding of nation, characterized by denial of the participation of the Other and those memories that may disrupt the homogeneity of the community. In the first part of the novel, Solomon is murdered and the emphasis is on his blackness throughout the brief investigation of the murderers. The authorities do not take the case seriously. The townsfolk judge Dorothy for her connection with Solomon, and Dorothy's efforts to ask Carla about her racist boyfriend are all given in a non-linear way to make the reader become more acquainted with Solomon's past and its connection to Britain. In the second part when we read about Gabriel and the civil war, the storyline abruptly shifts to his days in prison in London, where he and his cellmate are humiliated and affronted by the racist policemen and wardens. Through this abrupt shift, the novel leads the reader to see the parallelisms between the two experiences of racism on the part of the Other. In other words, just like the authorities in the urban area, the community of Weston depends on "social homogenisation, ethnic consolidation and intercultural delimitation" (Welsch, "Transculturality" 914) in constructing their collective identity. Therefore, it can be held that, by taking a critical stance against the notion of container cultures and collective identity, which is established on an imagined shared past among a specific group, the novel conveys a deconstructive approach to the exclusivist idea of Britishness embodied by the inhabitants of Weston.

The nationalist discourse seeks to reassert itself as an exclusive entity throughout the novel. The voice of the racist community is embodied by the landlord of the local pub, the Waterman's Arms. It is a traditional English pub, an exclusionary space of collective identity for Weston. During a conversation with the landlord, following Solomon's murder, Dorothy resents the townspeople and stands by her friend when she openly declares: "'Yes. … He was a friend of mine'" (48). Dorothy narrates, the landlord "looks over my shoulder at the other men in the pub. Now I understand. This is not a private conversation" (42). He trusts the power of his membership of the collective identity, which, he believes, informs the national identity. Such collectivity depends on the notion that "the nation-state is the natural

container … of collective memory" (De Cesari and Rigney 1). Therefore, he is only interested in defending the "innocence" of the village, or nation, and "decency" of its inhabitants:

> It's a sad business, isn't it? I'm sorry for him and I'm sorry for what it's doing to our Village" … [the landlord]
> "What it's doing to the village?" [Dorothy]
> "Well, it makes us look bad, doesn't it?"
> "I still don't understand," I say. This time I take a drink and stare directly at him.
> "Well it must have been an accident because there's nobody in Weston who would do anything like that. If you've lived here as long as I have, love, and you've grown up with folks like these you'd understand that there's not one of them capable of harming anybody. That's just how they are. Decent folk committed to their families and their community… we don't have murderers here." (42-43)

He assumes a continuous, stable national identity that is homogenous and constituted by people who would not harm anybody. His defence of the town discloses a nostalgic attitude, which is an attempt to retrieve the glorious times of the empire through myth-making, as evinced in his claim for purity. This can be explained by Gilroy's concept of "postcolonial melancholia" that refers to the "the guilt-ridden loathing and depression that have come to characterize Britain's xenophobic responses to the strangers who have intruded upon it more recently" (*After* 98). However, Weston fails to confront the loss of its self-proclaimed decency. Solomon's murder by the racist youth suggests a counter narrative to this myth of the purity of nation. Along with Solomon, the memory of the Middle Passage not only reveals the transcultural links between Africa and Britain but also reminds us of the horror of the colonialism and its consequences, which are sidelined by the hegemonic nationalist narrative represented by the landlord. In view of this, the pub is a place where certain cultural elements are appropriated to form the nationalist narrative. National identity and its exclusion of "the outsider" are naturalized within the pub. The novel challenges such portrayals by drawing a portrait of a small town facing the inevitable social change, suggesting that the impact of "distant" events has reached even conservative rural areas.

Another incident that illustrates the exclusionary attitude of the villagers is evident in how the pub owner mentions Jewish Dr. Epstein and her family, who, he believes, should have lived in Stoneleigh instead of Weston: "Up there they might

have fit in better, but living down here with us, well, it was difficult for them to mix…they don't blend in. They weren't even trying. You know what it's like, you've got to make an effort" (9). His racism and anti-Semitism lay bare his sense of belonging which is established upon the exclusion of others from his imagined nation. The inhabitants of Weston consider Dr. Epstein's family as intruders not only because of their race; in this hostile environment, class, gender, and religion also emerge as the bases to draw boundaries. It is reminiscent of Stuart Hall's comments on racism in Britain: "a culturally constructed sense of Englishness and a particularly closed, exclusive and regressive form of English national identity is one of the core characteristics of British racism today" ("New" 226). Weston community has determined its own boundaries in a similar way to nation-building. What they are engaging in is an act of removing differences to postulate a stable framework which the members of the community identify with. In other words, the hostile community fears change and "the others" who remind them of the connections that do not serve their understanding of national collectivity. Therefore, the intruder has to be banished and the violence is justified as is exemplified by the pub owner. In relation to this, Gabrielle argues that "these attempts to preserve 'pure' English identity and traditional identification patterns at all costs are certainly at odds with the image of England as a nation of progress" (311). Dorothy acknowledges the change, but her mental instability renders her narrative unreliable. Ledent considers Dorothy "as an allegory of her country" ("Attachment" 157). In a similar vein, according to Di Maio, Dorothy "loathing the homeless and gypsies, with her delusions and lingering depression resulting in a final breakdown and hospitalization, can be seen as an embodiment of England" ("A New" 258). In this sense, Dorothy's general mental instability is parallel to the reaction of the nation to social change, just as the fragmented narrative mirrors the disjointedness of the nation. Dorothy's relationships with non-white men and her involvement with Solomon remain in her hallucinations. Just like the people of Weston who ignore the inglorious parts of the past, Dorothy also suppresses her traumatic past by denying the death of his sister Sheila, for which she feels guilty and holds herself responsible. She represses her memories related to Sheila's being sexually abused by their father. Her jealousy of Sheila is reflected in her reaction: "How come I escaped

his attention? Did he love her more than me? I knew that he loved me more than he loved Mum, but why take Sheila down to the allotments with him?" (61). Furthermore, Dorothy's insensitivity about her sister's homosexuality and her estrangement keeps her from helping her sister when Sheila becomes ill. Her sense of insecurity increases after the betrayal of her husband and whenever she starts a new relationship, she thinks "either pity or curiosity motivated these men, and it never occurred to her that there might be any possibility of her seriously pursuing a liaison beyond the one she endured with Brian" (183). The emotional distress of the traumatic experiences deteriorates her mental health. Some parts of Dorothy's past, rendered through her narrative voice, prove to be different when told by the extradiegetic narrator. Dorothy depicts an "imaginary Sheila who likes [her] and still needs [her] help" (71). Avoiding the truth, she thinks "maybe Sheila and [she] can go abroad together" (60). Also, she is objectified and abused in her affairs; Mahmood treats her "as though she was merely an object speared" (176) to take his revenge on the white British society. As for Geoff, he uses Dorothy to achieve his goals at work. She gets used to being not loved and becomes more alienated. Also, it never occurs to her that she is abandoned by her boyfriends because of her destructive behaviour. She gives a doll to Mahmood's pregnant wife and likewise she calls Geoff's wife and discloses their affair convincing herself that her "[d]ignity has been restored" (206). This long-felt guilt and loss of dignity she feels because of her husband's infidelity, her feelings of humiliation in her affairs with married men, being accused of harassment by her colleague, and her compulsory retirement gradually cause her to lose touch with reality. After all, she moves to Stoneleigh to leave the past behind and she thinks she can confide in Solomon as he appears as lonely as she is, but his death dashes her hopes. Thus, she ends up in a psychiatric hospital where her doctor says: "You don't appear to be getting any better, Dorothy," and she responds in thought: "But he doesn't understand, there are good days and bad days" (307). Her feelings of exclusion cause her to refuse interaction with people. On the one hand, she is a threat to the collective image the townspeople draw for themselves; on the other hand, her efforts to forget about the traumatic aspects of the past mirror the villagers' desperately holding on to an image of the colonial past, which is illustrated by their racist views. Not only her mental

deterioration but also her connection with a refugee is a threat to the community. Dorothy regards herself as an outsider since she feels people are staring at her as if she had the "mark of Cain on [her] forehead" (6). As such, as a factor that threatens the imagined version of the nation, the outsider's potential to revise the narrative needs to be eliminated. However, it is transcultural memory that combines their narratives; the history of Africa and Britain. Conflicting perspectives and the presence of people from different ethnicities, religions, and cultures reveal that the so-called purity of nation and culture is already fractured and decentred.

In this regard, Dorothy is a figure who embodies a different perspective to social change. Her father, a war veteran, was a conservative man who had xenophobic thoughts, which had a considerable influence on Dorothy when she was younger. She explains,

> I've got stuck into these arguments in the past. With Mum and Dad, for starters, both of whom disliked coloureds. Dad told me that he regarded coloureds as a challenge to our English identity. He believed that the Welsh were full of sentimental stupidity, that the Scots were helplessly mean and mopish and they should keep to their own side of Hadrian's Wall, and that the Irish were violent, Catholic drunks. For him, being English was more important than being British, and being English meant no coloureds. (42)

Even though she feels threatened by the change, which refers to the multiculturality and increasing visibility of the inherent heterogeneity of society, she has come to accept England has changed and she begins to develop a different perspective especially after Solomon's death. On the one hand, she does not "want Solomon to become a problem in [her] life" (45), on the other hand, she becomes aware of the disturbing behaviour of the townspeople. When Solomon tells her about the racist letters, she is "ashamed" to reveal her lack of awareness of racism in the neighbourhood (38). After she learns about how Solomon is killed by the local youth and how the pub owner defends the murderers, she realizes that her perception is so different from the collective understanding of the community: "I … realised that there's no way that I can live among these people. I don't think they care about anybody apart from their stupid selves, and if this is true then I too may as well be living on the dark side of the moon" (59). She convinces Carla to report to the police all she knows about how her boyfriend Paul and his racist gang bully Solomon.

Dorothy also gets from Carla one of the hate mails addressed to Solomon and pinning "the abusive letter" to the notice board of the pub, "'maile[s]' it back to them" (55). As Agnes Woolley rightly puts it, "[r]e- presented within the open space of the pub, the words of the letter advertise the village's ill will towards Gabriel/Solomon, yet also draw the boundaries of Dorothy's own limited participation in village life as her defiant gesture goes unwitnessed" (55). Unlike the proud display of Englishness by both her parents and the townspeople, Dorothy can never feel she belongs there. Besides, her friendship with Solomon conflicts with her respect for the beliefs held by her parents. She comes to realize that her perception is now different from that of her father's and the community they live in. She pictures herself defending Solomon against her parents. "I know Dad has some opinions about coloureds, and that he won't be totally sympathetic about Solomon, but I still want to tell them. … Solomon was a proper gentleman" (64). Dorothy's imaginary conversation with her late parents can be interpreted as a dialogue between contemporary Britain and its colonial past. While her parents are committed to nativist narratives of the nation, her position as an outsider who acknowledges the change taking place in the country and her defence of a black man against the racist community contribute to the disruption of discourses of homogeneity.

Besides the feelings of isolation and marginalization, another point the novel highlights is the sense of dignity and decency that connects Dorothy and Solomon as a characteristic they look for in others. The emphasis on decency complicates the characters and creates ambiguity that makes it difficult to judge them. Throughout the novel decency appears only as a superficial trait that can be detected in the physical appearance and manners of people. Dorothy tries to retain the so-called English civility. Also, she is more focused on Solomon's manners than his skin colour. The first thing she realizes about Solomon is that he looks stern and solemn and treats her "with respect" (56), unlike the selfish and insensitive men in her life. Similarly, Solomon thinks "she is a respectable woman" (266) and says to himself "I admire her dignity" (260). They both have a strong distaste for vulgar behaviour but are not decent in their own behaviour all the time. Dorothy narrates how Mahmood "forgets to shut the door properly and she hears the undignified thunder of urine" (186). To her,

“without manners we’re no better than animals” (276). She maintains a professional distance with her landlord desiring him to be “familiar with a type of behaviour” that is “civilized” (54). She is annoyed by the standing of her pupil by the piano “without any sense of propriety” (21) and complains about the bad manners of her neighbours. She seems to be obsessed with the notion of dignity but it causes ambivalence in her characterization because she constructs herself differently. She is not so sensitive about others’ feelings. Her much preserved sense of decency disintegrates on several occasions. Dorothy is destructive in her affairs and hateful towards people such as the gypsies and the homeless; to her, homeless people are “disgusting, dragging themselves and the country down like this” (57). Also, she is delusional and unreliable in her narration. She tells Solomon about her sister as if her sister was alive. She pretends to be receiving letters from her: “After Sheila died, I wrote to myself and pretended it was her doing the writing. It was all I had left of her. My imaginary Sheila who likes me and still needs my help… my cowardice had lost me my real sister” (62). Her delusional relationship with her sister is a reflection of the lack of communication in her life. She suffers from a guilty conscience as she was jealous of her father’s attachment to Sheila, who was “Daddy’s little pet” because he “used to dote on her, and take her to the allotments, and buy her presents” (10). She seems to regret her avoidant behaviour in all her relationships in the past and for being alone now. Thus, in the construction of Dorothy’s personality, we can again see Phillips’s ambivalent attitude. As Solomon is the only possible recipient of her story, her mental instability gets worse after his death. A part of her holds on to racist beliefs as can be seen in her harsh attitude towards a gypsy woman at the end of the novel. Similarly, Solomon also believes in certain barriers in his social interactions. He sounds very prejudiced in his observations of people from different ethnicities:

> I had tried to talk to the few West Indian people I saw standing on the streets outside Sonja’s Caribbean takeaway with their dreadlocks and their cans of beer, but they were not friendly and they would often look the other way or shout at me and behave like drunken people. And I had long ago learned that there was little point in attempting conversation with the Indians or Pakistanis, for they were worse than some of the English people. (259)

His view of England reflects the "failed promise of multiculturalism" (Woolley 253) where diasporic groups live in a camp mentality as in Weston**.** When he first arrives in England, he meets Denise, a fifteen-year-old girl abused by both her father and her boyfriend, who shares her food with him. But her way of speaking to him, Solomon thinks, is very disrespectful. He judges Denise by the way she wears her school uniform "with neither pride nor dignity" (142). To him, she is a very "disrespectful" girl as she laughs at him and "speaks quickly and with confidence" (136). Solomon is not acquainted with the customs of people there. The novel avoids portraying him as an innocent victim; he is someone who has committed war crimes and been involved in violence by leading the drug-influenced rebels in Africa. He feels intensely ashamed about some of his actions such as his abandoning his wounded mother and his betrayal of his friend to secure his escape from his war-torn country. Yet, his is a story of survival, which makes it more complicated. As a soldier, he refuses to give a certain order as he "did not have the heart for this savagery," and his friend Patrick, who is known as Captain Juju, reacts: "You are a coward, Hawk. Somebody has clipped your wings and you cannot fly. This is war and in war you must kill" (131). He kills his friend to get his money; but he is also a helpful man trying to enable a secure passage for another refugee, Amma and her child in the refugee camp in France. His new life brings him face to face with a new set of changes. At one point, Solomon admits: "England had changed me, but was this not the very reason I had come to England? I desire change ... to learn ... to be educated" (247). And it is very ironical that these words take place long after the reader learns about how he is beaten to death. While some English citizens display xenophobic and rude behaviour, Solomon emerges as a decent and civilized man in England. He tries to escape atrocity in Africa but is murdered by the members of a community in England who claim to be civilized. Therefore, Solomon's dignity forms a contrast to the misconceptions of the townspeople. Phillips deliberately creates a setting that embodies the "mythology of homogeneity" ("Extravagant" 289) to contest the prescribed roles of the "civilized" British citizens and an "uncivilized" colonial subject. The racist murder of Solomon, Carla's mother's hostile attitude towards Dorothy, the gossip of the townspeople about Dorothy and Solomon, and their covering up the murder are all indicative of how

biased and shallow the landowner of the pub is in his belief in the purity and decency of Weston.

The transcultural connections that upset the collective memory of Weston are parallel to the novel's ambiguous tone. McLeod describes Phillips's characters as "uncertain and ambivalent creations," referring to their ordinariness ("Caryl" 25). This ambivalence Phillips deliberately attaches to social relationships is a part of his realistic approach to the depiction of contemporary society. It is also observed in the title of the novel. As Ledent puts it, the title is a reference to the "interplay between attachment and detachment" ("Attachment" 154) in the novel. As she maintains, "the phrase 'distant shore' encapsulates the simultaneous hopeful pull, yet inherent hopelessness, of the longing to belong" (154). The protagonists fail to belong but at least they know there would be a possibility of sharing their stories. Dorothy "had a feeling that Solomon understood [her]" (277). Significantly, throughout the novel, although Solomon faces negative attitudes, there are people who help him settle and find a job. For instance, Denise shows sympathy by sharing her food with him. She also confides in him about the violent treatment of her father. Her father discovers Denise and Solomon when they fall asleep in a house, where nobody lives, and Solomon is arrested for sexually assaulting the girl. But Denise refuses to testify against him and the case drops. These gestures of sensitivity and empathy imply another possibility in contrast to the hardships Solomon encounters. Racism and the prejudiced attitude of the community is disrupted by empathy and support of these characters. Similarly, because of the widespread racism and misconduct against the migrants, Dorothy's sister Sheila does not press charges against the black man who assaults her in London. She imagines the violent treatment he would receive from the police and chooses to do nothing about the attack. Another instance of empathy occurs when Solomon is given a second chance in life. When Solomon is in prison, Katherine, the social worker who works for an "immigration law firm" (167), helps him with legal assistance. She understands that his inability to respond to the questions about his past stems from "the personal trauma he suffered just before his having to flee for his life" (98). Although her husband is suspicious, she helps Solomon when he shows up at her door after his being swindled by his countryman, Emmanuel. She gives him a lift to

the motorway and advises him to change his name to avoid trouble and leave London. Then Solomon, hitchhiking on the motorway, is picked up by Mike, the truck driver, and begins to live in his house together with his surrogate parents, the Andersons.[28] The couple give Solomon shelter in their house in a friendly atmosphere. They help him apply for political asylum and secure him "a position as a night-watchman" in Stoneleigh (263). Also, they give him Mike's car after his death. At Mike's funeral, Mrs. Anderson embraces Solomon. Solomon remembers:

> Mum reaches up and touches my face with her fingertips. I was much caressed by this family, and my attachment and gratitude to them are very great. She is a small thin woman, but this gesture feels strong. Mum holds me in her spell. And then she places the palms of her cold hands against my cheeks and pulls my head down towards her. She kisses me at the point where my wet hair meets my wet skin. And then she releases me. (241)

The dynamic nature of identity makes it possible to call a stranger "mum" regardless of blood bonds. According to McLeod, these are the signs of social transformation. As he states, "Phillips looks to the business of everyday life for the principles of a truly progressive and transformative prospect" ("Diaspora" 9). Beyond the prescribed forms of communication, transcultural encounters make cultural exchange possible. Solomon's experience with these few benevolent people can be regarded as the possibility of the development of a new cultural identity. Thus, even if the novel ends with a sad note, there are moments of interaction that can be taken as a glimmer of hope for the future. But this optimistic possibility remains at the personal level. Phillips draws a realistic picture and avoids romanticising the social relationships. Therefore, it can be said that the novel is representative of contemporary British society. For example, while parting at the motorway Katherine says to Gabriel: "I feel bad about putting you out in this weather, but don't you worry, somebody will soon take pity" (161), which gives her "an easy way out of pragmatic as well as moral responsibility" (McLeod, "Caryl" 29). The way she helps Gabriel is evocative of Britain's treatment

[28] In his *Materiality and the Modern Cosmopolitan Novel*, Alan McClusky interprets the Andersons' "home" from a cosmopolitan theoretical point of view. He considers the house as "an inclusive, egalitarian space inhabited by a cosmopolitan mixture of people who live there by virtue of individual choice rather than the coincidence of birthplace" (66).

of the immigrants. The benevolent characters are not free from prejudice, either, as Mike's words on migrant populations reveal:

> I'm an old traditionalist, Solomon. I want fish and chips, not curry and chips. I'm not prejudiced, but we'll soon be living in a foreign country unless somebody puts an end to all this immigration. … It's everywhere. You see, you're in a different situation, Solomon. You're escaping oppression and that's different. … I mean, you're working. You're no scrounger. (258)

Although he is an Irishman, a target of discrimination as a member of Irish ethnic community, he is prejudiced as well. Although he seems to welcome and appreciate immigrants as a part of the country, he also positions them as strangers who cause problems. In a similar vein, although the Andersons have Scottish origins, Mr. Anderson has the same categories in his mind. Especially after some racist youths vandalize their place to threaten them for their hospitality towards Solomon, the Andersons are intimidated and try to explain to Solomon why he is not welcome in England:

> There's an awful lot of you, and the system's already creaking to breaking point. I mean, things are particularly bad if you want to get into one of our hospitals. People are upset. … You see, Solomon, it's just that this isn't a very big island and we don't have that much room. … People think … that you have too many children…. that you don't really want to work. It's in their heads and it makes them mad. (256-57)

Even though they provide him with shelter and help him find a job, they acknowledge that those who consider immigrants a problem to be right. In this sense, as McLeod points out, the novel describes "the allegedly changed multicultural present" ("Diaspora" 14), because while immigrations across national borders suggest a transformation within the country, the conservative people of the town hold on to nationalism. Although they are not persecutors themselves, they believe that the country is threatened by the outsiders. The novel challenges such classifications by problematizing the so-called English civility and the stereotypical image of the threatening black man by introducing Solomon's story of struggle for survival in a hostile environment. He is neither a rapist nor an invader or exploiter; such assumptions are at odds with Solomon's timidity and vulnerability in England.

While the novel depicts these characters' kindness on some occasions, its ending suggests that there has not been much "change" in Britain, as perceptions are still conditioned by historical and cultural forces that inform essentialist ideas. Phillips does not offer resolutions to the questions he raises in his fiction: Solomon is murdered; the xenophobic attitude of the village persists; Dorothy remains an outcast in the city where she was born. The novel ends with a pessimistic note: "My heart remains a desert" (277), Dorothy reflects at the end of the novel. Yet, the novel disapproves discourses of homogeneity and resists the discrimination against the marginalized people by bringing the stories of two outsiders, a mentally unstable woman and a black man, to the fore. The illustration of several acts of human engagement that provide instances of sympathy is put against the exclusionary boundaries and helps form bridges that unite people no matter what race, class or background they have. Thus, by means of the connection established between a refugee and an outcast citizen, the novel suggests possible connections for the future. It offers an alternative narrative that foregrounds the experiences of socially marginalized figures by forming a link between the legacy of colonialism and contemporary realities; and, thereby, it urges the reader to consider race, ethnicity, nation, and belonging as fluid rather than mutually exclusive categories. Phillips's novel suggests hopeful possibilities and makes a demand for change, but the change may remain illusionary unless the contemporary reflections of the past are approached with a responsible attitude that takes the transcultural connections informing national identity into consideration.

CHAPTER 5

TRANSCULTURAL MEMORY OF THE BLACK DIASPORA ACROSS GENERATIONS: *IN THE FALLING SNOW*

In the Falling Snow (2009) portrays the relationships between three generations of migrants: Earl, a post-war migrant of Afro-Caribbean descent, his son Keith, a second-generation, British-born, middle-class man, and his son Laurie, a third-generation, mixed-race teenager. It is Phillips's first novel dealing with a second-generation black British character in detail and a third-generation mixed-race character in contemporary Britain. *In the Falling Snow* illustrates the evolution of the notion of black Britishness over the second half of the twentieth century through the memory of the Windrush generation and the persistent predicament of racism, displacement, disappointment, and how the cultural heritage of the black diaspora passes from one generation to the next. Throughout the novel, it is observed that the problems between sons and fathers are similar although they have different forms of diasporic identity. Particularly with its portrayal of the third-generation mixed-race descendant of black immigrants, the novel focuses on a sense of the changing cultural conditions of black diaspora experience. While the Windrush generation is getting older, the second generation still experiences the consequences of migration and identifies with a sense of unbelonging, and the third generation displays the complexity of diasporic identity and diverse affiliations. As such, the novel charts the transformation of the black diaspora, which not only illustrates the construction of identity in various periods but also reveals the cultural transformation of Britain.

In the Falling Snow has received critical attention mainly from the perspective of the generational positioning of the black British. Bénédicte Ledent focuses on the ways in which the novel examines "the lives and the degrees of belonging" of the three generations of the black British ("Mind" 164). Likewise, Abigail Ward deals with how the novel "explores a spectrum of black British diasporan positions… in a sometimes

inhospitable and turbulent country" ("Looking" 297). Critics also pay attention to the novel's exploration of more complex configurations of race that shape the society. For example, according to Petra Tournay-Theodotou "possibly 'post-racial' ways of belonging" ("Coming" 52) emerge with the third generation black British in the novel and she convincingly argues that through its presentation of three generations of the black diaspora, the novel "offers a representation and commentary on the more hopeful possibilities located within black and mixed-race British identity politics" (60). In a similar vein, referring to the post-racial, John McLeod states that "the matter of race … unfolds differently" in the novel ("Extra" 45). Evidently, critical attention to the novel revolves around the change the diaspora existence goes through in Britain. Building on these notions of transformation, this chapter focuses on the transcultural trajectories that are not limited to the black diaspora and discusses the role of memory in generational relationships and migratory trajectories. Accordingly, this chapter argues that *In the Falling Snow* explores the transforming trajectories of transcultural memory through the portrayal of the third generation and the experience of new migrants in contemporary Britain. The experience of Eastern Europeans as immigrants echoes the memories of the post-war generation, which opens up a space to discuss post-racial possibilities and new cultural links transcending the racial and cultural boundaries. However, while the post-racial possibilities seem to gesture towards a more inclusive society, the persistence of the imperial legacy emerges as an exclusionary discourse. Furthermore, the novel's focus on intergenerational relations provides a perspective to observe the transmission of memory over a couple of decades and the role of migration as a site of transcultural memory. Due to the rupture caused by migration and the hostility of Britain, black cultural heritage is disrupted; Keith knows little about his father's past. As for Laurie, escaping the received models of identity, he does not identify with his ancestors, their hometown, and the roots. As such, the issues that construct diaspora identity beyond race, ethnicity, and nation further challenge the essentialist notions of identity. Thus, this chapter also examines the role of memory in intergenerational conflict and connections, which is an essential constituent of identity construction in diasporic communities. The memory of the black Atlantic contests the fixed notions of nation as it is revealed by deeply rooted

transcultural connections between the country and its imperial past. However, while its past trajectories are still relevant in the case of the post-war immigrants, and partially in the second generation, the third generation takes new routes with new affiliations as they move away from the idea of rootedness.

In the Falling Snow is inextricably bound with the novels analysed in the previous chapters because all three texts trace the memory of black diaspora and imperial legacy across the centuries in Britain. In his exploration of the genealogy of black Britain, Phillips depicts the experience of the slave descendants and postcolonial refugee flow in his previous novels. While *A Distant Shore* juxtaposes global realities with the local communities who are prejudiced against change, *In the Falling Snow* takes "the change" in England mentioned in *A Distant Shore* one step further to deal with a diverse range of factors and wider migratory trajectories that have shaped contemporary Britain. Phillips expands his exploration of migration to incorporate European migration, particularly from Eastern Europe. He gives a portrayal of contemporary cosmopolitan London populated with characters from diverse backgrounds to provide another perspective to the position of the black diaspora in relation to different groups of migrants. Despite ethnic diversity and the effects of globalisation, the contemporary urban setting is still marked by an anti-immigrant sentiment that targets not only black immigrants but also the white ones. Phillips works again with his recurring themes of migration, home, displacement, alienation, and fragmented family structure, yet to expand the exploration of such matters to post-racial possibilities. He achieves this through the encounter of the protagonist with some European immigrants, which suggests that race is emphasized less than class and citizenship in social hierarchies and exclusionary practices in contemporary Britain. In his encounter with a Polish immigrant, Keith feels financially superior and considers himself a British man without question. The diminishing effect of race as a category to determine relationships implies the possibility of "a post-racial society" for the future (Tournay-Theodotou, "Coming" 56). Thus, the scope of the novel's engagement with issues of identity and belonging moves beyond race; more inclusive and newly emergent concerns become more emphasized in social relationships.

The depiction of the third generation, who identifies with multiple frameworks beyond the boundaries of older ways of identification, also expands the transcultural trajectories of the memory of the black Atlantic in the novel. Over the last decade, the focus of black British struggle has shifted away from the experience of first and second generation of migrants' claiming Britishness towards an exploration of belonging beyond the confines of the black diaspora. Immigrant experiences from different cultural backgrounds echo each other demonstrating configurations of today's networks that are "inter-meshed and inclusive" (Welsch, "Transculturality" 200). In line with this, the novel presents a dynamic model to illustrate that black cultural heritage is not an unchanging legacy; there is no essence to it as exemplified by different ways of identification for each generation. With regard to the changing conditions of black diaspora, Gilroy states that "the dynamics of dispersal and local autonomy" are readjusted "alongside the unforeseen detours and circuits which mark the new journeys and new arrivals that, in turn, release new political and cultural possibilities" (*The Black Atlantic* 86). These new political and cultural routes are taken by the third generation as illustrated in the novel. Laurie's identification with different routes such as youth culture, American hip-hop music, and European football teams exemplifies the mobility of memory in various transcultural connections. He is not an alienated immigrant who feels unbelonging around the national sites of Britishness; on the contrary, he belongs to the generation that transforms the cultural identifications and attach new meanings to historical sites. This transformation displayed in the novel is in line with Astrid Erll's reference to "the reconstruction of … mnemonic 'routes'" in diaspora (*Memory* 66). As she states, "the paths" that have been taken appear in "certain stories, rituals and images" and may not "what social groups may claim as their 'roots', the alleged origins of a seemingly stable cultural memory" (66). Thus, the transcultural connections are not only related to the history of the black Atlantic experience, but also to the possible paths in the future. The imperial legacy still persists but the post-war migration, and the consequent sense of displacement, is no longer marked as a paradigmatic event shaping the identity of the third generation. The position of the third generation not only suggests a critique of essentialism but also attempts to transform the collective memory of the nation. Although Phillips employs

familiar diasporic tropes, a break with the older ways of identification on the part of the black diaspora is implied throughout the novel. In rethinking the identity of Britain, the novel seeks to take into account the converging of histories, Britain's transcultural memory, and relations with migrant societies. As such, with the plurality of cultural inheritance and future possibilities defining the identity of the upcoming generations, the ways of attachment to the country also change.

The novel starts with a description of the protagonist, Keith, a social worker in his 40s, walking in the suburbs of London, where, as a black man, he still attracts attention of some people who glance at him because of his skin colour. He goes through a kind of mid-life crisis after his suspension from work because of his affair with Yvette, a young colleague, who accuses him of harassment and exposes his messages after his breaking up with her. He decides to focus on his plans to write a book on the history of black music, so he starts his research. In the library he begins to stalk a young Polish girl whom he invites to his home but it does not turn into an affair. Throughout the novel, Keith reflects on his past, his mother, who died when he was little; Brenda, his step-mother, who raised Keith when Earl spent years in hospitals due to his mental breakdowns; and, his marriage with Annabelle, who is a white, middle-class woman. As revealed through flashbacks, Keith and Annabelle have met while studying at Bristol University and got married against her parents' will. They got separated upon Keith's confessing his infidelity and now Annabelle only gets in touch with him about their son's problems at school. Keith is estranged from both his father Earl and Laurie and is unable to understand their predicament in life. While Earl is a silent figure unable to overcome his painful past, Laurie has problems at school as he is involved with a gang-oriented street culture. Since "Laurie seems somewhat indifferent to the idea of spending any time with his father" (7) and because Keith does not like the idea of spending time together with Annabelle's boyfriend, Keith is not willing to visit them so often. Towards the end of the novel, however, Keith tries to reconnect with his father and decides to spend more time with Annabelle and Laurie. The narrative ends with Earl's death and Keith's ambiguous decision to stay with Annabelle and Laurie.

As in the novels discussed in the previous chapters, Phillips uses a fragmented narrative style in *In the Falling Snow*, too. Through flashbacks, Keith's childhood memories and Earl's memories of the post-war Afro-Caribbean migration intersect the contemporary portrayal of life in Britain. The novel highlights the complexities of diaspora experience in the twenty-first century through this fragmentation. To this end, the same scenes are revisited in flashbacks with different details revealing the effects of memories on the present-day identities. The structure also lays bare the distinctions between generations and the disruption of the transmission of black cultural heritage. Keith is the focal character whose perspective is given in a third-person narration that shifts back and forth in time recounting his current story, his relationship with his former wife, and his childhood years. Only the last chapter is predominated by Earl's monologue that interrupts Keith's narration, providing another perspective to the migrant experience, through which the novel foregrounds the effects of the past on the present despite global changes. The novel has, as Gordon Collier describes, a "recollective architecture" (384), which is built on references to memories. When juxtaposed with Keith and Laurie's stories, Earl's memories of post-war years reveal much about the roots of current racism and prejudice in British society. Furthermore, through Earl's monologue, which also contains temporal jumps in itself, the difference in the outlook of each generation is manifested to show that identity is not stable; it is fluid and cannot be dependent on an essence. Identity is mainly constructed by the dynamics of past and present and in relation to the social frameworks each generation experiences under different circumstances. The plurality of identity is parallel to the multiplicity of stories, experiences, and voices the novel illustrates. Intergenerational relations and a network of transcultural connections involving the black diaspora and the immigrants from Eastern Europe characterize contemporary England described in the novel.

Some common characteristics with Phillips's previous novels can be recognized throughout the novel. Through memory, the predicament experienced by the previous generations are gradually uncovered. The problematic relationship with the father figure and broken families are also recurrent themes in the texts analysed. Yet, regarding the novel's focus on issues such as class, youth culture, and the fading

of the Windrush generation, the diasporic experience illustrated in the novel differs from the ones in Phillips's previous novels because the story is set in an urban area of contemporary England. As such, the novel can be interpreted as describing the change as announced in the first lines of *A Distant Shore*: "England has changed" (1). While *A Distant Shore* shows that there has not been much cultural shift in the rural areas, *In the Falling Snow* refers to some global changes and their effects experienced in the urban areas. Unlike Weston, the rural area described in *A Distant Shore*, London as a cosmopolitan city offers a different experience to the immigrants who have different subject positions in each generation.

In order to understand the effects of the change portrayed in the novel, one should examine the intergenerational relations and differences between the three characters. Carole Boyce Davies identifies the three generations of black diaspora as follows: "the first, which came with the Windrush (1948), and through the 1950s; the second, the post-1960s generation … unwilling to accept racism; [and] the third generation, the Afro-Caribbean children growing up and assuming the rights of the state" (Davies 514). In the novel, the generational difference between fathers and sons are conveyed through Keith and Earl's memories and Laurie's detachment from his father and, especially, his grandfather, whom he considers a "weirdo" (120). Erll considers these three generations as the "three reservoirs of memory mediated in three different ways" ("Fictions" 117). Respectively, while Earl's memories represent the Windrush generation who struggles to survive in a racist environment, Keith's experiences portray the second-generation who faced "a growing politics of racial intolerance expressed at an official, institutional level" (Procter 95), and Laurie is the mixed-race third generation youth who considers England home. For Keith, the Caribbean is a distant hometown that black people should see to connect with their cultural heritage. However, for Laurie, visiting Europe would be much more interesting than seeing his ancestors' homeland. As each member of generation grow up in different circumstances, their current outlook is parallel to their own generational outlook. While Earl defines himself as a black man from the Caribbean, Keith is a middle-class black British man, although he has an unresolved sense of in-betweenness. As a mixed-race descendant of Caribbean migrants, Laurie's subjectivity

draws from multiple transcultural influences and differs from his father's and grandfather's.

The generational differences are revealed in various transcultural bonds the characters form. The exploration of their generational outlook, which Ledent describes as an "inclusive representation of the diaspora" ("Mind" 162), provides a perspective on the change in diaspora consciousness illustrated in the novel. Particularly Earl's story presents the interconnectedness of the black Atlantic memory. The novel refers to the memory of the Windrush generation and the legacy of the empire through the portrayal of their predicament both in the Caribbean and in England. Phillips acknowledges that the title of the novel comes from a haiku by Richard Wright, who, as an African American writer residing in Paris, experienced "double displacement" ("An Interview" 636)[29]. This sense of displacement heavily afflicts the post-war generation migrants. The concern of the novel with black Atlantic memory is revealed by Earl's story, which he tells in a monologue. As in Phillips's previous novels, here one can observe the persistence of the past in the present and how destructive the effects of the colonial times are even in contemporary London. In Earl's story the novel revisits the memory of first-generation migrants and the promises of the empire to the former colonies. His narration takes the reader to the post-war era when the migrants struggled with these feelings of displacement, marginalization, isolation and disappointment. The dual experience of roots and routes contributes to the construction of migrant identity in Earl's generation. Earl is one of those immigrants who cross the ocean with high expectations believing in the myth of the mother country as a better place. Earl remembers his sister Leona telling him: "You planning on staying here and growing old in this house? … why you don't take yourself and your books to England. I can sell the house and send you the money to pay back the price of the boat ticket. …Think about yourself Earl? Think about what you can do that will improve your situation" (263-264). She also believes in the myth of the mother country as a hopeful

[29] Richard Wright is one of the writers who has inspired Phillips. In an interview with Ward, Phillips says of him: "That sense of isolation, that sense of displacement in Wright—I see it mirrored in a lot of people, a lot of the writers I admire who … find themselves living away from their home, but still the umbilical cord is strong and profound, and binds them. He was just one example of many" ("An Interview" 635).

place with new opportunities. Earl's best friend, Ralph, who left one year earlier, is one of those Caribbean immigrants who are attracted by the promises of access to social and economic opportunities in Britain. He thinks of it as a wonderful country:

> According to Ralph, once he make it to England he say he will travel to the north of the country because some friend of his godfather promise to find him a job in a factory casting iron and the man claim a West Indian can make big money doing this kind of work. However, Ralph say that five years he coming back home to open up a garage and establish himself in business as a mechanic. He already have the slogan for the advertisement that he say he going to put in the newspaper: "Bring your auto to the Car Doctor Ralph for he going fix it up nice, nice." (256)

Earl has dreams to fulfil and after Ralph makes it to England, he follows his friend one year later. He thinks to himself "[e]ven though I don't have no plans, I still have my dreams, and my dreams all locked up in the law book and the dictionary that I used to carry everywhere" (256). However, his expectations fail him as he comes to see that the mother country has nothing to offer. Earl's first impression of England is notable:

> I land in England on a cold Friday morning. … It seem to take forever to pass through the bay of Biscay with its rough, rough sea that is so bad that at night not a single person want to play dominoes, or organize a dance, or any of that kind of thing for everybody is suffering hard, but then eventually all the pitching and rolling and vomiting come to an end and suddenly the sea is smooth like a slack water pond, and I find myself gawping upon land. (252)

Just as the refugees' journey in *A Distant Shore*, the arrival of the immigrants is depicted in specific vocabulary such as "rough sea" "rolling" and "vomiting," which bring to mind the experience of the Middle Passage. In this sense, migration opens a space for the movement of memory carrying the "collective images and narratives of the past" across ages (Erll, "Travelling" 12). The novel reminds us of both the imperial legacy that pervades the country and the transcultural connections between Africa and Britain to contest the notion of cultural purity. Furthermore, the novel depicts Britain as a gloomy place just as in the previous novels. Earl observes the streets in England:

> I see plenty of white men in dirty clothes … spitting on the ground and shouting at each other. … Jesus Christ, I don't know England have such poor white

> men… even before I get off the damn boat England punishing my mind and my body and teaching me a hard lesson about what kind of place it is. (252)[30]

He had illusions and a certain notion of Britishness in his mind caused by the immigration policies of the country, which promise rights of settlement, jobs, and a new life. Once he had dreams of getting into university to study law, making money and living a decent life as a lawyer. Migration, for his generation, means hope for accomplishment. However, his desire for intellectual growth, which is evidenced by his carrying a book with him all the time, is shattered by his cultural experience in England. His dreams of a new life and equal participation fail in the face of the hostility of Britain. The experiences of his generation are in conflict with their expectations in the first place. In relation to migrants' accounts of post-war Britain, Corinna Assmann contends that "colonial history returns to the 'mother country'" along with the immigrant families because their memories offer "ways of questioning discrete or exclusive national narratives by foregrounding entangled histories and connectivities that also have a bearing on ethnic, national, racial constructions of identity" (63). In a way, Earl's narrative contests the image of Britain with a glorious past by reconfiguring it from a postcolonial perspective. In a multicultural society, the memories of the colonised may be disruptive as they add their own version of history to the collective memory of the empire. Earl's generation constitute a narrative that contests the glorious image of the empire. His memories challenge the official versions of history by foregrounding the mythical aspect of the notion of the mother country, which, in reality, lets them down. Earl wants to study to become a lawyer but instead he starts work at a factory and becomes a janitor at a university. Britain never allows him to take pride in an achievement. It is revealed that his mental breakdown starts with the social discrimination he faces in England. Instead of a welcoming attitude and good opportunities of accommodation, job, education and career as promised by Britain, what Earl's generation experiences is the challenge of becoming the Other in

[30] Earl and his friends' use of language and accounts of the predicament of the Windrush generation are reminiscent of the portrayal of the post-war immigrants in Sam Selvon's *The Lonely Londoner*s (1956) and George Lamming's *The Emigrants* (1954). In his "Following On", Phillips mentions Selvon and Lamming as his "literary ancestors" and states that "these writers had a profound effect on my generation, the second generation in this country who found themselves trying to deal with loneliness, ambivalence, and confusion about their relationship to British society" (36).

"a sea of white faces" (253). This experience of disappointment in the mother country, which is a legacy of the empire, becomes a part of the shared memory of the Windrush generation in the sense that the social frameworks surrounding each member's everyday life are quite similar and determinant in their identity formation.

Connecting the contemporary England to the memory of the empire, the novel introduces Earl's transcultural journey as a part of the shared history and collective memory of Britain. Astrid Erll suggests that "'Empire Windrush' refers to the public memories of mass immigration to Britain; it is produced by collective, mediatized commemoration; it is an occasion for self-identification, and for the identification of others, as a generation" ("Fictions" 114). Therefore, as Erll defines it, Earl's monologue is "a Windrush mininarration" (121). It offers a vantage point for examining the transcultural memory of a whole generation. As Tourney-Theodotou also notes, it is "like a confession" and "a representative testimony for his entire generation" ("Coming" 52). Earl, his friend Ralph, who is murdered by a white gang on streets, and Baron, who accommodates in the same community centre with Earl, all experience the same disapproval, infantilization, displacement, and nostalgia for home. They begin to evaluate themselves from the perspective of "the white gaze" (Fanon *Black*) in an essentialist and racist community from the moment they arrive in England. Earl tells Keith about his experience of how England puts him in the position of an alien as follows:

> What you must do is play the stranger because it make them feel better; play the part of the stranger and nod and smile when they ask you if you know what is a toilet, or if you ever see running water coming from a tap. Look upon their foolishness like a game you winning and the stupid people don't even know that you busy scoring points off their ignorance. Play the damn stranger and you can win in England. (254)

So, Earl gets used to playing his role to survive in a hostile environment. In relation to this Phillips notes that "first-generation migrants … have to learn quickly how to read the new society in order to successfully navigate their way forward. Sometimes this involves learning when to remain quiet, and somewhat compliant, and not risk causing offence" ("Rude"134). Earl's assuming a position to meet the expectations of the society echoes Bhabha's ideas on the reduction of the colonial/postcolonial subjects to an existence of "almost the same, but not quite" in his concept of mimicry ("Of

Mimicry" 89). Earl has a passport and the official rights in England through the act of "Commonwealth migration" (*IFS* 279). Yet, he and his friends feel they have to position themselves as outsiders to show that they do not pose a threat to the essentialist understanding of Britishness. This generational outlook of the migrants is reflected by Baron as well: "Look at us. The sons of Empire. The men who came to this country to make life better for ourselves. What have we got to be proud about, aside from the fact that we're still alive? Have we made this country a better place for you?" (196). His sense of displacement is observed in his room as well. Baron has a picture of "Lady Di," a "crucifix" on the wall, and some "exotic plastic flowers" in his place (245). He wants to go "home" but needs his "medication" provided by Britain (246), so he has to stay. Baron asks Keith, "When your mother and father come to this country, you really think that either one of them expect to die here?" (184). They wanted to return but it was impossible to go back to their former lives, as Phillips confirms "One can never go back" ("Of This" 157). These feelings of unbelonging and desperation have become a part of the Windrush generation's collective memory. For Earl, the Caribbean represents rootedness but a return to roots is not possible as in the case of the African father in *Crossing the River*. His nostalgia for home symbolizes a return to a safe space where he is not humiliated and he does not need to struggle to exist.

The uncovering of memories through Earl's narrative functions as a counter-narrative to Keith and Laurie's ways of identifications and helps the reader understand the trauma of the first-generation migrants, which stems from the legacy of colonialism and slavery. As Earl talks more about his past, it becomes clearer why he is a silent and isolated man. Earl admits that "the idea of England is fine. I can deal with the idea … I can deal with the idea" (297), remembering his crushed hopes of a better future. The clash between how migrants from former colonies see England and the harsh realities is revealed in Earl's conversation with the English lecturer Dr. Davies at the university Earl works as a janitor. When Earl first visits the university to get admission, Dr. Davies ignores his questions about the entrance exams. Instead, he interrogates Earl about his migration. He imagines the Caribbean as an exotic paradise on earth: "Who would want to flee paradise for this, for heaven's sake?" (279) he asks looking

out of the window. Dr. Davies represents the blindness in British society to the realities of the post-war immigrant flow. He does not care about the lack of opportunities, instability of political system, or the economic problems that surface in the colonies after decolonization. He infantilizes Earl and his friends by referring to them as "just kids" (279). He claims to understand "the situation because his sister is a nurse in Ceylon, and before this she is in Nigeria" (279) as if this is enough to understand the circumstances. Likewise, Earl has an imagined homeland in his mind when he remembers the Caribbean. He positions England as an industrial, solemn, dark place just as Solomon describes it in *A Distant Shore*. Contrary to the dull atmosphere of England, Earl's homeland is depicted as an unspoiled world. He recalls the "waves lapping up the wooden pier"; "the rush of the wind passing through the leaves of the palm trees" (254); and the "smell of saltfish frying" (270) feeling closer to home. London is an ugly cold metropolis, where "the lights from Piccadilly Circus burn [his] eyes and make [him] feel giddy" (251); and "all the people" are "rushing about" (252). The comparison of the two places not only highlights the differences between them but also gives clues about the nature of the transcultural journey of the migrants. The movement from roots to routes serves as a tool to make sense of the frameworks shaping their experience and transforming cultural and symbolic images such as Britain as a land of opportunities and higher standards and the Caribbean as a paradise-like place. Earl condemns England and misses his hometown he has has to leave due to its poor living conditions. In other words, as the social frameworks surrounding every individual, their memories transform to live up to the current circumstances. Thus, Earl's nostalgia is not for the homeland itself but for the past, the time before his social frameworks changed.

The underpinnings of British imperial legacy mark the post-war migrants' life with despair and trauma. As Lola Young points out, in the early 1960s, the policy of migrant integration "was perceived as a threat to the British way of life and national character" (87) because "black people come to embody the threat to the illusion of order and control and represent the polar opposite to the white group" (24). Particularly, black masculinity is positioned at the intersection of masculine entitlement and a subordinate blackness, rendering white men superior. This can be

observed in the experience of Earl and Ralph who are victims of racist violence, which leaves Earl with mental distress and causes Ralph's death. They are denied to have an access to financial resources as they cannot get decent jobs. Earl cannot even get a decent room as they are allocated for the "European Only" (283). When he goes to a restaurant, he feels all the eyes are on him. Lack of recognition and feelings of insignificance gradually lead to his loss of dignity and failing mental health. The sense of humiliation and experience of black subordination under white hegemony is parallel to his loss of the sense of manhood and informs their generational outlook. In their first years in England, a white man warns Earl and Ralph about their relationship with white women. Earl remembers the "Englishman in a grey suit" (269) on the train who tells him "[i]f you're good enough to fight and die with us, then you're good enough to live on my street" (270-71), but then warns Earl not to get close to white girls: "Some of you boys do take liberties and it does stir up bad feelings. I mean, there's no reason for you to be giving white girls babies, is there? Or tapping them on the shoulder at 'Excuse me' dances. (270). Earl's denial from every aspect of social life is in line with Fanon's concept on the psychological effects of racism in his *Black Skin White Masks* (1952). Regarding the denial of participation, Fanon recalls that a "man was expected to behave like a man. I was expected to behave like a black man" (114). Similarly, Earl is told to stay within the boundaries of the hierarchies of masculinity and internalize the image of his "self" as other. The colonial discourse puts the masculine racial other in a position where they are everything that the white man is not (Fanon 114). Another incident that reminds Earl of this hostile attitude happens on their first date with Brenda. He takes her to a restaurant, where he was not welcome before when he was alone, but "[f]rom the moment [they] enter the place [he feels] everybody looking down on [him] and [he] can tell that the … people are talking about Brenda" (293). As exemplified in *Crossing the River*, the relationship of black and white people is still considered a threat to the purity of the nation. Miscegenation is coupled with the threat directed to the masculinity of the migrant male. The racist stereotyping of black masculinity as hypersexual and violent pervades society's belief that black men require control and guidance. As Staples states, "[t]he trait of black male sexual competency was pejoratively viewed as the sexuality of beasts and the

bestiality of sex" (Staples 14). Therefore, black men "has been seen as a threat to the powerful status of white male" in society (14). Furthermore, Ralph is beaten up by a white gang because "[t]hey believe all this inter-racial business begin in the dance hall, but what they can't deal with is when the English girls begin sniffing back" (281). One day Ralph takes Earl to a park where prostitutes work, Earl thinks to himself: "Everything is not all right and, although this is the third time that Ralph sweet-talk me into coming to the park with him and looking for skirt, I already know that I won't be troubling with this type of business no more for it's no good for a man like me. (283). Ralph is murdered for he is seen with a white woman who is the sister of one the racist white teenagers in the park. Earl's mental distress is coupled with the trauma of losing his friend. He tells Keith: "every time I think of Ralph my head hurt like hell and the voices start up again" (293). Over the years, he becomes more and more aggressive and on one occasion he "gave up on books and began to conclude arguments with Brenda by stripping off his shirt and shouting at nobody in particular" (81). Brenda sends him to a mental institution by getting help from the police, thereby his sense of manhood is bruised in his relationship with Brenda, too, who thinks he is "sensitive like a petal" (49). Thus, Earl is the "socially castrated" form of masculinity in black culture (Staples 8). His feeling of being deceived by a white woman causes him to suffer more and finally he totally withdraws from social life.

Earl's identity is reconstructed by his sense of displacement and homelessness; he comes to accept the fact that he cannot return. As Baronian et al. contend, "the lost homeland is the defining moment of diasporic identity" (12). There is no return for Earl, but there is no way to fit in the society he lives in, either. Baron tells Keith about Earl that "[h]e needs to be among people. His own people. I live next door to English people for forty years, but I had enough. They don't want me, then I don't want them. … The man's head is hurting bad from two times in hospital …Your father is a proud man but he has a lot of pressure on his soul" (247- 248). Earl's sharing his memories and forming a connection with his son for the first time helps him alleviate his pain. He needs to unburden himself to his son whom he has not taken care of until he was six. He confesses: "It's not you that I don't want, son. I just don't want this life, because England already hurt me enough as it is. It seem like every time I discover some peace

of mind then something else come along to trouble my head" (297). He consoles himself by narrating what he has gone through but his present state of mind is totally determined by his past; he accepts defeat and hopelessness. Keith begins to see that it is not nostalgia that causes Earl's homesickness, but the fact that England is a disappointing adventure and full of traumatic experiences. Brenda also explains to Keith how Earl has suffered from the effects of displacement and racism. To her, the reason for his psychological illness is that "England had hurt his head" (221). Earl wants to leave this hostile place and wishes to return to the homeland but it is like an imaginary homeland. He can neither forget his roots, nor can he go back to home which is not there as he leaves it. As Rushdie explains, "exiles or emigrants or expatriates are haunted by some sense of loss, some urge to reclaim, to look back" but they "will not be capable of reclaiming precisely the thing that was lost"; they create "invisible ones, imaginary homelands" (10). This attitude of both Baron and Earl can be taken as generational, which is caused by both trauma of displacement and disappointment upon exposure to the racist attitude of the host country. The imperial legacy still stigmatizes the immigrant populations and causes them to identify with a mythical notion of homeland even after they have spent more than forty years in England.

Drawing attention to the generation gap between fathers and sons, the novel exemplifies various kinds of attachment to black British heritage and Britishness. Unlike Earl, Keith and Laurie identify with Britishness in different ways. As C. Assmann suggests, "[t]he distinction between first, second, or third generation is used broadly to characterise different points of view and experiences in the shared history of migration that change with the socio-historical context, resulting in different national affiliations, modes of belonging, and cultural identities from one generation to the next" (3). While to Earl England is a hostile country that threatens his dignity, his grandchild Laurie identifies with the current youth culture in Britain. Issues of belonging and unbelonging are irrelevant to his way of identifications. As for Keith, although he occasionally identifies with Britishness, he feels he should connect with the black Atlantic for cultural identification. His experience cannot be delimited by the idea of container cultures. When Baron tells Keith about living next to people who do not want him there all the time, Keith understands what he means, yet he cannot see

the whole picture, and Baron reacts "the kids don't give a damn" (184), implying that Baron and his children also have the same generational gap between them. A particular scene describing Earl's hospitalization after a heart attack shows the difference in their outlooks. "I want to go home, Keith," he tells his son, "I don't mean to some stupid English house. I mean home. Home, home. …You understand what I mean? I'm not from here" (252). In relation to Earl's idea of home it can be said that Earl's generation belongs to the category Hall describes as "the essential black subject" ("New" 224) who holds on to being black as an identity marker to challenge the "the dominant regimes of representation" (224). However, Keith belongs to the second phase of black cultural politics that marks "the end … of the essential black subject" (225). Alongside race, various social positions such as class are involved in the construction of his generational identity. Keith has no notion of homeland. Each generation has a different notion of home, as Phillips believes, "belonging is a contested state. Home is a place riddled with vexing questions" (*A New* 6). Compared to the former generation of migrants, Keith holds an ambivalent position; he neither dreams of a homeland nor fully identifies himself with Britishness. Considering Laurie's future, Keith discusses living abroad with Annabelle, who responds, "[s]o where do you think we should have brought him up? The West Indies, your imaginary homeland?" (206). Her words make him feel his in-betweenness more deeply. Clingman sees Keith as "a feeling of semi-belonging, semi-alienation, all compounded in his second-generation West Indian/British experience" ("Rights" 376). Keith's ancestral roots are not passed on to him and he does not know much about his father's family in the Caribbean. His sense of incompleteness is marked by cultural in-betweenness that holds him back from identifying with the plurality of his own self. His social status as a middle-class citizen and his former marriage to a white woman help him see England as home but he still cannot feel he fully belongs. This brings to mind Phillips' reminiscences of his childhood as a second-generation black British: "like all non-white children in Britain during this time I tiptoed somewhat cautiously through life," he notes ("The Pioneers" 275). Indeed, Keith's need to form a connection with something meaningful in his past is caused by the fact that, he was mostly taken care of by his white stepmother, Brenda, because of his mother's early death and his estrangement from Earl due to his mental

distress. Thus, his bond with the Caribbean is weak. As C. Assmann notes, "migration often involves a rupture of family transmission, which leads to serious feelings of a deficit among their second-generation protagonists" (138). It might be the reason why Keith is not happy with who he is. Keith and his "generation of kids, who were born in Britain … had no memory of any kind of tropical life before England" (*IFS* 38). In relation to his generation, Phillips states that

> [t]he key issue for me and my generation - the second generation, if you will - growing up in the Britain of the late sixties and seventies was identity. We spoke with the same accent as the other kids, we watched the same television programmes, we went to the same schools, we did the same exams. Surely, we were British. Well, of course we were, and eventually we insisted that we were even in the face of a nation which continued to invest in a racially-constructed sense of itself. We endured discrimination in schools, in jobs, in housing, the same discrimination that was earlier visited upon our parents. ("The Pioneers" 275)

As a black man who witnessed the anti-black policing of the 1970s and as the head of the local council's "Race Equality Unit," Keith has a tendency to interpret the world in terms of issues of race, inequality, and prejudice unlike the third-generation young people. In relation to identity construction, C. Assmann points out that "[f]amily is … a primary point of reference and framework for the social construction of identity" (2). She defines family as

> the primary site of transmission of cultural values, norms, and traditions, albeit in close interaction with other social networks and institutions that are part of the greater societal and cultural context. It constitutes the framework and informs the ways in which personal identities emerge and narratives of the self are constructed. (12)

Family narrative allows one to have a sense of past and present and "links the individual life to the larger setting of transnational history" (138). However, due to migration, the frameworks get complex as it causes "a drastic change" in the lives of the family (12). In this sense, what is missing in Keith's life is this framework that locates him within the British society. Considering the transmission of cultural heritage between generations, C. Assmann further explains that "[m]igration has a strong impact on family relations and identity construction" (2). Possible disruptions within the family or with other groups in the host society may cause "frictions" and

separation and the tensions "between old and new… often give rise to conflict and threaten family ties" (13). McLeod considers the failure of the transmission of culture and memories as "the erasure rather than transmission" because "access to the past is blocked" in such cases ("When" 20). The generational disconnection might cause memory to disappear or change over time. This erasure of the heritage is mirrored in the key image, which is also used in the title of the novel. The title is reflective of a moment from Keith's childhood. It is conveyed in a scene in which Earl takes Keith to see a film on his birthday and it begins to snow, which is enjoyed by Keith while Earl takes it as a threat that erases the evidence of his presence. Through memories revealed by flashbacks, different time periods are mingled especially when Keith remembers some painful memories interrupting his present flow of thought. He is usually alone in his apartment and Brenda's photograph on the wall triggers his memories of his thirteenth birthday when his father showed up after his stay in a mental institution. As he recalls "the clouds were high and heavy with snow" (88) when Earl took him to the cinema,

> huge white flakes were tumbling down from the sky and coating the pavement white … They began to walk back in the direction of the bus stop, past the parked cars that were already clad in snow, and as the flakes continued to fall on their bare heads he could feel his hand tight and safe in his father's hand. He looked behind him and saw two sets of footprints where they had walked. ... As they turned a corner, he tugged his father's hand. His father looked down at him and smiled. He pointed to the sky. "Look at all the snow!" His father continued to smile. (299)

When his father took him back home to Brenda and left, Keith watched him from the window: Earl "left behind a single set of footprints, and he remembered lingering by the doorstep and watching closely as the falling snow steadily erased all evidence of this father's presence" (300). His remembering the specific parts of these memories is an "act of reconstructive remembering" that is "characteristic of autobiographical memories" (Erll, "Fictions" 123). As Earl's footprints are erased, Keith's ties to the cultural heritage are figuratively erased. Ledent interprets the snow as a "northern element" which represents "the educational and professional opportunities afforded to him by English society" ("Mind"165). As such, it is obvious that these memories are constructive of identity. It is evocative of the succession of generations and their

different kinds of attachment to Britain. Keith's education is based on Brenda's principles following the idea of being a decent man. As he is estranged from his father, he becomes seemingly more British in his job, marriage, and relationships. In Earl's case, it is Earl's journey across borders that has transformed the social and cultural frameworks of his identity and his family relations. He re-evaluates his cultural environment and has to put himself in a new position. It is a disruptive experience for him; however, Keith's generation has not experienced this disruption; they were born in England, where they have faced the lack of political recognition. The second generation has lived through the political turmoil to get basic rights. Thus, Keith still evaluates the world in relation to the discourses of his youth. As such, generationality marks the identity and belonging of both characters.

Another issue the novel raises is the relationship between white women and black men and how its nature has been changing through generations. As mentioned earlier, Earl's sense of manhood is hurt by social, cultural, and economic restrictions he has faced. Decades later, despite all the cultural diversity and social change, when Keith and Annabelle get married, it is still seen as miscegenation by many people like her racist parents who are against their marriage. Even the registrar did "not look them in the face, and the man's hand shook as he turned the book around for them to sign" (33). Also, both Earl and Keith's relationships with white women have failed. Earl's relationship with Brenda ends with bitterness as he is resentful and feels betrayed about Brenda's having him sectioned. Keith and Annabelle's marriage also fails because of Keith's infidelity. Laurie's relationship with Chantelle, whose pregnancy is revealed at the end of the novel, is the only one that does not meet unacceptance. Chantelle's race is not clearly specified which is also indicative of the change in race relations. Especially when compared to the community's reaction to the relationship of Joyce and Travis in *Crossing the River*, it can be said that racial politics and the dynamics of mixed-race relationships have changed for the better in the lives of the third generation. This gives insight into how mixed-race children are represented in contemporary Britain.

Keith is still partly attached to older ways of identifications such as race and ethnicity as markers of identity. However, as transcultural links vary, things have been

changing and are a little far from fitting in the categories Keith has in his mind. For instance, he observes three mixed-race youngsters on the tube: "He can see that, like his son Laurie, all three kids are partly white, but it is clear from their baggy dress sense, and from the way that they slouch and speak, that they identify themselves as black" (13-14). What this scene illustrates is a part of changing racial positions and definition of identity markers. Keith is a bit intimidated of the younger generations as the appearance of them makes him aware that "today's teenagers. … Black youths, white youths, mixed race youths, to them all he is just a middle-aged man in a jacket and tie who looks like he doesn't know shit about nothing" (14). He cannot expect any sense of solidarity or shared identity he felt with black people when he was younger. These are the first impressions the novel hints at the changing racial politics in England. On the other hand, Laurie's generation is a part of what Phillips refers to in *A New World Order* as follows: "the colonial, or postcolonial, model has collapsed. … there will soon be one global conversation with limited participation open to all, and full participation available to none" (5). He emphasizes the hybridity of all cultures and impossibility of having a pure fixed essence of identity. Rejecting any identification with a nationality, Phillips claims that we are all involved in cultural hybridity that connects us globally, yet "nobody will fully feel at home" in this new world order (5). His vision of such global unity is still far from achieved as he illustrates in the novel. However, the twenty-first century he depicts is marked by transformation and complexity of identities. Phillips recalls:

> I grew up in Leeds in the sixties and seventies, in a world in which everybody, from teachers to policemen, felt it appropriate to ask me some more forcibly than others-for an explanation of where I was from. The answer, 'Leeds' or 'Yorkshire' was never going to satisfy them… a smile of benign patronage to his face. 'No, lad, where are you really from? Things are different now: Britain appears to have yielded to the inevitability of multi-cultural, multi-racial society. (*A New* 303)

What Phillips experienced as a teenager is similar to Keith's experiences as a second-generation black British man. In contemporary Britain, however, boundaries are not that visible anymore; in this sense, the reason why Keith fails to understand the youth is not only about the generational gap but the changing ways of identification in making sense of the world. Keith rather asks himself about the meaning of being black

and the heritage. He strives for a sense of belonging because he feels stuck in the crisis he has been going through. Separated from his family and suspended from work, he feels a lack of purpose in his life and deep disappointment in his generation.

Keith is an educated and cultured man who is financially secure, yet he is still concerned about the way some people stare at him on the streets. He has not experienced the displacement and trauma suffered by the post-war migrants but still he does not feel any sense of belonging to the current globalized world, either. In other words, Keith is a man who neither identifies with the experience of the post-war migrants, nor understands his son's generation who is distant to migrant experience and colonial legacy. He tries to get a sense of family origin when Earl tells him of the past. Also, he thinks Laurie has the same problem. Keith he is estranged from his roots, he thinks his son's problems are the same with his so he wants to take him to the Caribbean as a part of his own genealogical search, but Laurie and his friends are not concerned with such issues; their identity is not constructed by feeling of marginalization or a sense of displacement.

As a third-generation mixed-race young boy, Laurie looks to the future rather than his roots and the black Atlantic memory. In Laurie's case, as he never experiences the trauma of displacement and the culture of his ancestral roots, Keith assumes that Laurie feels unbelonging but his struggles in life are not the same with his father's. The legacy of roots is not valid in the lives of the third generation who are more into current realities. Laurie might inherit the memory of the black Atlantic through his grandfather's stories but he is not interested in knowing more about it. Besides, both Earl and Keith are absent fathers who are estranged from their sons' lives because of the disruption of the family bonds. Earl spends years in a mental institution while his son is being taken care of by Brenda, who dies when Keith is a young adult. Keith has already turned thirteen when Earl is there to take care of him. Likewise, Keith and Annabelle get divorced when Laurie is fourteen and Keith never understands his son's problems. Erll draws attention to the ironic family constellation in their family. Accordingly, Laurie's grandparents on both sides are connected transculturally. Annabelle's racist father, who once served as a soldier in the army of the British Empire is the grandfather of a mixed-race child. As Erll notes, Keith's "family history

displays … an instance of the entangled genealogies typical of modern postcolonial and multicultural societies" ("Fictions" 120). The representation of such connection "in the literary text is a practice of transcultural remembrance" (120). The novel underlines it is not only the black people who suffered the disruption of family ties; it also gives room to white British characters who face the consequences of colonialism. For example, like black children who grew up in broken families, Annabelle also did not get to spend much time with her father. She remembers the "seaside holidays spent with her mother while her father was away on duty in Ireland, or inspecting troops in Germany, or in some long-forgotten outpost of what remained of the empire, such as Gibraltar" (*IFS* 231). She believes, however, that "children ought to spend time with both of their parents, particularly if the child is without siblings" (230-231). It is also ironical that while her father has contributed to colonisation as a soldier of the empire, she marries the son of a Caribbean immigrant. Her father does not approve of her marriage with a black man and having a mixed-race grandson, but he has contributed, in the first place, to the formation of the social structure that is responsible for the migration of people from Britain's former colonies in the post-war era. These transcultural connections mark the identity construction of the family members on both sides.

Keith's identity is constructed upon transcultural links, too. Brenda's role in Keith's upbringing is of importance because, although she is not his biological mother, Keith likes her as a mother. He recalls Brenda tell him that "[n]o matter what happens between your dad and me, I just want you to know that I promise I'll always be there for you, Keith. You do understand, don't you?" (170). He remembers how it feels walking with her on the streets: "judging by the way people were looking at them, he imagined that they appeared strange together, but Brenda never seemed to mind how people stared at them" (170). Just like Joyce and Dorothy, the white female characters in the novels discussed early on, Brenda, too, appears with a mindset beyond the narrow-minded ideas of society. Yet, while she advises Keith to become proud and strong, she also instils middle-class values in him. The pretence of good behaviour plays a significant role in his personality. Brenda always told Keith to behave himself and

> [a]fter his father was readmitted to the hospital, and it was just the two of them alone, she drilled him in the importance of always saying 'please' and 'thank you', and if his tie wasn't straight, and his socks pulled up all the way, and his shoes properly polished, he wasn't allowed to leave the house. (15)

He is taught that people will think themselves higher than him and he should not give them a reason to think so. His notion of success and "British" way of living are shaped by these patterns. Brenda's middle-class values impose on Keith a white British lifestyle which moves him further away from his father, who gets upset about his son's upbringing. Keith tries to follow her advice and repeats the same pattern in his relationship with his son when he advises him to "put in more effort and try twice as hard as anybody else" (158) just because he is mixed-race. Thus, Keith gets disappointed when "he watches as his son eats quickly, tearing at the pizza with his hands than rather cutting it neatly into slices, and he realises that there are some things that he cannot talk to Laurie about. It is probably too late" (119). Laurie greets his friends shouting "Yo!" and his father with an "upward nod that begins with his chin" (117). Keith sometimes warns Laurie: "[w]hat kind of English is that?" (103). But unlike Keith, Laurie does not feel the need to make up for his skin colour in society. Keith fails to recognize how mistaken he is in his way of taking care of Laurie's problems by constantly trying to impose his values on him.

Accordingly, the conflict between Keith and Laurie is crucial in the novel's portrayal of social transformation and its effects on new forms of identifications. The novel explores how the third generation might react to the persistent issues of belonging and suggests new ways of identifications. As Huyssen contends, "today's hyphenated and migratory cultures develop different structures of experience that may make the traditional understanding of diaspora as linked to roots, soil, and kinship highly questionable indeed" ("Diaspora" 84). Laurie's position as a black British person is different from his father's as a consequence of the changing relationships in an equally changing world. Although the imperial legacy is still persistent in racial discrimination, ethnic diversity and cultural heterogeneity are determinant characteristics of Britain. As in *A Distant Shore*, the novel includes characters from various cultures and ethnic backgrounds in Britain such as Indians (22), Nigerians (44), Bangladeshis (247), the Polish and Latvians (200); and, the cultural plurality is

laid bare with references to the plurality of traditional cuisines such as Chinese and Indian food (74), Greek and French restaurants (124), Italian beer (124), and kebab shops (201). This cultural plurality is pictured to challenge the notion that being British means being white. As a consequence of globalization, increasing migration and mingling of people from different backgrounds over the last decades, new ways of belonging have been formed by new generations. Gilroy welcomes this as a positive process and uses the term "conviviality" to explain

> the processes of cohabitation and interaction that have made multiculture an ordinary feature of social life in Britain's urban areas and in postcolonial cities elsewhere. … It does not describe the absence of racism or the triumph of tolerance. Instead, it suggests a different setting for their empty, interpersonal rituals, which, I suggest, have started to mean different things in the absence of any strong belief in absolute or integral races (*After* xi).

Accordingly, essentialist approaches to the notion of the nation are transformed in this convivial culture as the reductive models of identity are rendered problematic. Phillips illustrates this in his depiction of the metropolitan London. To Earl and partially for Keith, race and ethnicity are still markers of identity and nationality. No matter how globalized their life is now, the past still persists in the present hierarchies. Yet, the novel acknowledges that contemporary global realities offer new frameworks for identity construction. Keith fails to understand the current youth culture. He thinks to himself:

> Every day now he witnesses packs of these youngsters on the street, or on the tube, or on the buses, swearing and carrying on with a sense of entitlement that is palpably absurd. Each of them seems to believe that he or she is an "achiever", and that they deserve nothing less than what they call "maximum respect." (29)

What Laurie's generation is interested in is not a mythic past they have never been familiar with but individual interests. Laurie moves away from the previously held racialised models of belonging. Rather than the black cultural heritage, to which Keith tries to draw his son's attention, Laurie steps outside the diasporic collective associations and chooses his own routes. The novel neither celebrates nor critiques this change of attitude or loss of interest in the collective past. It demonstrates that shifting boundaries require new ways of crossing the borders. Laurie has no sense of cultural

blackness or ancestral roots. To Keith, this merely illustrates that "today's teenagers no longer respect any boundaries" (14).

> "Your mother is trying her best, but there are some things that she can never really know about," Keith tells Laurie.
> "You mean because she's white?"
> "No, I suppose what I really mean is because she's not black." (157)

Keith also blames the white teachers at Laurie's school for Laurie's problems. He lays claim to Laurie's cultural and class difference by attempting to locate him as an outsider and constantly relating his teenage problems to his race and ethnicity. However, Annabelle sees the difference and Keith's mistake in drawing boundaries for his son's identity. She says:

> I'm saying he's not you, Keith. We didn't bring him up like you were brought up, remember? No white working-class estate and National Front kids on every other street corner. In fact, sometimes I don't think he's very streetwise at all. … The truth is, I just don't want you to forget that he's my son, too, warts and all, and that makes him softer, okay? (190)

She tries to make him realize that racially mixed individuals feel free to accommodate different affiliations and reject categorisations compared to Keith's generation. But Keith keeps failing at this. Laurie's "headphones jammed onto his head" and "his body gently bobbing to the beat of the music" as he walks "loping" (116) in the streets of London. Keith tells his son, "I know it's not exactly straightforward for you out there on the streets. … maybe this is something that you might find easier to talk about with me. After all, there are some things that I've been through myself as a black kid growing up in this country" (157). But, for Laurie, these racial categories do not mean much since he does not feel connected to the black British heritage. Keith thinks that he can form a connection with his son on the basis of some shared values as members of the black diaspora but Laurie does not have the same problems or values Keith did in the past. An incident that marks the generational difference between the father and the son takes place when Laurie is interrogated by the police for his friends are involved in a crime and he is the one who is found with a knife. Keith asks him:

> "Did the police abuse you in any way?"
> Laurie looks up at his father. "What?"
> "I'm talking about racial abuse. Did the interviewing officer verbally abuse you in any way?"

"What are you on? The copper who interviewed me was black." (213-14)

Keith expects hostility from the police because he is still under the influence of the experience of being black in Britain during the 1980s when youths "were being brutalised and beaten by Maggie Thatcher's police" (38). This causes him to fail in building a common ground to connect with current realities. Keith belongs to the generation of black British people who grew up in the Thatcherite years, struggling to change the definition of Britishness. As Phillips explains in one of his essays:

> Implicit in the new Thatcherite concept of nationhood was the idea that one could not be both black and British. Black equals bad, British equals good. We will take you as British as long as you look like you belong – no afros, no dashikis, no beads, no shoulder bags, only a suit, tie and briefcase, thank you very much. For the first time in British history, two types of black person were now being officially recognised: the 'good' and the 'bad' – the British and the black, the assimilable and the subversive ("Ignatius Sancho" 247-8).

Therefore, Keith's memories of youth are so much different from his father's and Laurie's. He feels he does not belong but he does not have a notion of any other homeland. In addition, because of Brenda's imposition of certain behaviour patterns on him, he feels insecure and holds an ambivalent position. When he notices the curious eyes on him while walking dressed in his jacket and tie in the streets of the areas where immigrants live, he feels anxious:

> Gone are the days when … he would feel perfectly safe if a posse of black youths got into his carriage. Back then he often took silent satisfaction in seeing how their exuberance made older white people somewhat uneasy, … Black youths, white youths, mixed race youths, to them all he is just a middle-aged man in a jacket and tie who looks like he doesn't know shit about nothing. (14)

Keith's is not only a mid-life crisis; he has an identity crisis, which can only be healed by connecting with the past. His generation identifies with a sense of being positioned on the periphery of the nation. All he knows is that he needs to struggle to get recognition and acceptance as a British man. However, in McLeod's words, "Laurie's challenges are those of a new generation of Britons" ("When" 45). Thus, Keith is unable to relate to his son's attachment to the gang culture when Laurie explains it to him: "It's got a lot to do with respect. You can't let people just large it up in your face and disrespect you. A man's got to have respect or he's nothing better than somebody's punk" (158). But to Keith, the youth do not deserve respect: "What have they done to

earn respect?" (158) he wonders. His identification with the race riots and hardships in his youth is a crucial part of life; he chooses to work as a social worker so that he can become one of those "people who could help explain black anger to white people, and white liberal do-gooding to disgruntled black people" (42-43). He still defines the world from the perspective he had in his youth. However, Laurie's identity is not predetermined by black cultural heritage or racial struggle for recognition; his generation's relationship with the Caribbean becomes increasingly distant. Laurie seeks recognition outside the collective frameworks that have shaped the experience of the black diaspora in the post-war era; his affiliations are beyond the boundaries established in the past. Keith is frustrated at Laurie's perceived indifference toward his ancestral heritage. To Keith "[y]ou're supposed to know something about where you come from. Or at least be curious" (126). That is why he wants to take Laurie to the Caribbean for his summer vacation. However, for Laurie visiting Barcelona would be much more interesting than seeing his ancestors' homeland as he is a fan of FC Barcelona. His affiliation with a foreign club rather than a national one is illustrative of his disinterestedness in the issues that construct his father's identity. McLeod states that "football today is one popular cultural environment where older racial, national and class protocols are deliberately dispensed with" ("Diaspora" 7) and Laurie seeks such connections across borders that express his personal choices and thereby transcends the confines of the black diaspora.

Apart from Laurie's generational outlook that does not consider race and ethnicity as absolute markers of identity, another issue that draws attention to the social transformation in contemporary British society is the novel's engagement with Eastern European migrants. Keith's involvement with Eastern European migrants throws light on issues such as class and citizenship in the construction of hierarchies within British society. In relation to the importance of social class in Britain Phillips states that

> Britain is a deeply class-bound society, with a codified and hierarchical structure which locates the monarchy at the top, with a roster of increasingly 'marginal' people as one filters down to the bottom. It is a largely inflexible system … and any societal change or development, such as immigration, is likely to cause instability. ("Necessary" 128)

The novel exemplifies this inflexibility in the new immigrants' status as outsiders. Through the dynamics between European migrants and a migrant-descendant black man, the novel both questions social hierarchies and portrays changing cultural politics and the idea of Britishness. In an interview conducted in the year when the novel was published, Phillips states that "I don't think people understand how deeply important a measurement of our identity class is; it doesn't make any sense to me to think of race but not class. … the two work hand in hand" ("Postcards" n.pag). In the novel Phillips exemplifies this idea through Keith's relationship with economic migrants. For instance, when he is with Danuta, Keith sees himself superior since he is "a respectable middle-class professional man" (75). As Tournay-Theodotou notes, Keith's "relationship with Danuta, a cultural other . . . is based entirely on the economies of trade" and that "Keith's racial identification seems to play no role" ("Coming" 56). Keith compares Danuta's living standards in London as a migrant with his own status as a middle-class citizen when he identifies himself with Britishness. He regards her inferior to his own social and economic position in society. When Danuta reads his note, which he gives to her in the library to ask her out, he thinks "he can't imagine an English girl reading his note and then agreeing to come for a drink with him" (68). He both objectifies and infantilizes Danuta just because she is economically at a lower level and a non-British subject. In their meeting, as Tournay-Theodotou further states, "the primacy of ethnicity or race as a social stigmatizer has been replaced by class, and cultural status with poverty and cultural otherness, as the new social determinants" ("Coming" 56). When Danuta's friend Rolf pays a visit to him, Keith finds out that Danuta has lied about her life. Ironically, Rolf sees Keith as a "rich man" (208), and informs him about the life of a migrant in contemporary London. As a social worker working in the Race Equality Unit, Keith is expected to sympathise with Rolf. On the contrary, he gets suspicious of both Rolf and Danuta swindling him. In view of this, McLeod states,

> through the figure of Keith, Phillips stages an exploitative, cellular milieu of ongoing unequal relations: between chauvinistic men and the women they harass or betray, between wealthier migrant descended figures and impoverished newcomers, between white and black Britons, between black Britons and white Poles. ("When" 21)

The social exclusion of Eastern European migrants highlights another aspect of the change in racial politics in that race, the novel suggests, has become less pre-eminent compared to class. Accordingly, the predicament of living in a cosmopolitan city has become more apparent in identity construction. Interestingly, because Danuta is a white but non-British subject, Keith's ethnicity does not come to the fore as a significant dynamic in their encounter. As she is economically situated on a lower level than Keith, in their relationship class position and culture replace ethnicity and race as markers of status.

The twenty-first century Britain as depicted in the novel is rendered progressive in that social relations change for the better in the lives of younger generations. The novel draws parallels between ethnic identification and socio-economic status and how it has changed over time as can be observed in different generations. While for the post-war generation boundaries were much more strictly drawn, for the second-generation social mobility is possible. Keith is a university graduate and has white-collar job in a council office; in other words, as Ledent notes, even "Keith's professional duties are evidence of the increased black male visibility and participation in social work" ("Of Invisible" 263). However, Earl, as a post-war migrant, has not had the same opportunities. Moreover, the police officer interrogating Laurie is black; the institution accommodating Earl and his friends is called the Mandela Centre; Keith is the head of a unit working for racial equality, all of which suggest a shift from the times that cause Earl's mental breakdown to today's more individualized affiliations embodied by Laurie's generation, who feels more free to define their ways of identifications. The novel's depiction of a third-generation mixed-race character and the contemporary cosmopolitan London, inhabited by European migrants, correspond to Gilroy's ideas on twenty-first century Britain. In an interview he says:

> I'd been living in the US for a number of years, and I returned to Britain and felt the environment around the politics of racism has been radically changed, on the one hand by the issue of security, and on the other by some of the things that New Labour has done. A whole generation of activists – my generation – seem to be management consultants! Even the black nationalists are busy managing the health service and the police. ("Stories" n. pag)

This change in the racial politics does not mean that racism does not exist anymore, but there are "other things" that shape social life as Laurie tries to explain to his father: "The thing is, Dad, I don't know if things are the same now as they were when you were my age. … It isn't just about discrimination and stuff … but it's also about other things" (158). These other things may suggest the transformation in defining identities beyond racial categories. Laurie's disinterestedness in the issues such as roots and sense of unbelonging complicates the essentialist notions of identity, ethnicity, and culture that are indicators of Britishness. As such, the novel engages with the notion of a possibility for "a post-racial society" which, as Sara Upstone notes, refers to "societies in which race ceases to be a dominant factor in our social interactions and relationships" (3). In describing the contemporary race relations Gilroy proposes to abandon the concept of race and mentions the "nonracial" that offers a space "to liberate humankind from race-thinking" (12) that would lead to "planetary humanism" (*Against* 17). As he offers hope for a transformed society, Gilroy's writing has been seen as rooted in utopian thinking. McLeod, in his "Diaspora and Utopia," draws attention to the post-racial in Gilroy's thinking and how Gilroy's writings on planetary humanism can be seen as a post-racial utopian society. As he argues, contemporary black British writers are not celebratory of the idea of a happy multicultural society as assumed by many, rather they offer a hopeful but possible society. Upstone also suggests that the optimism of these writers should not be confused with a "lighthearted" attitude towards race which goes with a denial of inequality. Rather, the post-racial vision refers to "an explicit focus on how racial prejudice continues to be relevant in the present and what efforts might be needed to make this less of the case in the future" (4). She explains that texts that use "realist strategies" and "offer readers an identifiable context without which transformation appears merely fantastical and therefore unachievable" can be successful in defining debates around race and about the future of Britain (4). In this respect, it can be claimed that *In the Falling Snow* is such a text with its portrayal of a recognizable world with possible changes for the future. Such engagement can be observed in Laurie's way of identifications. It is still a racially prejudiced world they live in, yet the novel suggests a possible future determined less by prejudice.

In a similar vein, when Phillips is asked about his vision of a new world order, he states that he believes "old essential identities are falling apart… because we are becoming an increasingly multi-cultural, multi-racial, intermarried, multi-ethnic confused world, confused in the best sense of the word" but he also acknowledges that "we still have people speaking to the orthodoxy and the desirability of these old fundamentalisms" ("Not Afraid" 101). Therefore, Phillips approaches this new order with scepticism, which manifests itself in the novel as ambiguity. It stems from the reconstruction of the routes of the black diaspora and new transcultural connections in our current globalizing age. Although race is less important as a definer of identity in contemporary Britain, it is not clear whether Keith feels he belongs in England and Laurie's problems are related to the issue of race. It might be explained on the basis of McLeod's ideas on the ambiguity in Phillips's fiction. He refers to Phillips's works as engaging with "progressive utopianism" that offers a non-idealised but a hopeful alternative to social relations. It is critical of "celebratory utopianism" that "can never progressively contribute to social transformation as it remains detached from and blissfully unaware of the material world" (4). McLeod raises questions about the waning effect of the past and the history of black British resistance while acknowledging that "such pasts might have much to offer the present" now ("When" 19). Accordingly, in the novel Keith and Laurie's conflict is an example of this transformation; older ways of identifications are no longer valid. McLeod further states that "in contemporary black writing of Britain there is emerging a new envisioning of the nation prompted, but not preoccupied, by racial and cultural specifics, in which the notion of mixed race plays a significant guiding role ("Extra" 48). By partially detaching themselves from the past and focusing on the present, the third generation seems to be able to construct identities which are no longer defined by the contemplation of the past. Thus, the novel expands the horizon of race relations in Britain by introducing a character as Laurie who proposes an alternative sense of self and challenges stereotypes about racial identifications.

This alternative sense of self emerges as a defining characteristic of the transformation of collective memory by transcultural connections embodied by the third generation. Laurie's challenges, his identification with street youth culture, gang

member attitude, and lack of interest in the past, characterize the new generation who shares neither British national memory nor the memory of the black Atlantic. Ward interprets Laurie's "gang-based youth culture" as a part of "American youth attitudes" ("Looking" 301). However, this perspective would contribute to essentialist notions of black identity. In the novel migration causes the emergence of new frameworks in relation to both roots and routes that transform cultural and national narratives. Laurie's identity construction depends on transcultural relations as he is coming from a migrant family and living in a multicultural society as a mixed-race individual. It is most obvious in one of the crucial scenes where Keith takes Laurie on a London tour to form a fatherly bonding. When they are on the London Eye, which offers views across London, Keith asks:

> "Have you ever been inside the Houses of Parliament? I mean on a school trip or something?" Laurie shakes his head. "Let's take a walk to Westminster Bridge. We probably can't go into the actual parliament at this time of day, but you get a great view from the bridge." They stand together on the bridge and look across at the back of the Palace of Westminster. …Laurie is clearly waiting for his father to say whatever it is that is on his mind. "Does this mean anything to you, Laurie?" He gestures with his arms in a somewhat grand manner, hoping that the flamboyance of his motion will suggest a kind of ownership. He then drops his arms and places both hands on a low stone wall and leans forward slightly. Laurie shrugs his shoulders. "I'm not sure what you're on about." (155-156)

The collective memory of the nation is inscribed in such places as the London Eye, Westminster Bridge, the House of Parliament, and imperial monuments. These places that have historical significance in the construction of national identity function as sites of memories, *lieux de memoire,* in Nora's terms. Sites of memory reflect a collective, shared knowledge and commemorate the glory of the past. In other words, such historical buildings "are instruments of the dominant political elements" (Winter 315) in British society such as victories that were won, glory of the empire, and the power that has shaped Britain. Focusing on the role of national frameworks in the act of remembering, Nora contends that "*lieux de memoire* are fundamentally remains, the ultimate embodiments of a memorial consciousness that has barely survived in a historical age that calls out for memory because it has abandoned it" (12). The sites gain their meaning through "moments of history" that has attributed a role to these

sites to celebrate the triumphs and victories of the nation (12). As a second-generation black British, Keith knows what these sites are associated with in the national memory of Britain and he does not feel he is a part of that shared culture. Assuming that Laurie has also problems with feeling at home around these sites, he attempts to give Laurie a "history lecture [about London], which is of course a veiled attempt to persuade Laurie that this is his city too" (*IFS* 153). Actually, Keith projects his own sense of unbelonging to Laurie by suggesting "a kind of ownership" (165) to him, whereas "his son is probably quite at home with the Tower of London and the Palace of Westminster and Waterloo station and St Paul's Cathedral" (154). When they are at the top of the London Eye, Laurie reveals that he gets excited at the sight of new Wembley Stadium. Keith is more focused on the historical buildings as legacies of the empire and reminiscent of the exclusionary notion of Britishness. Laurie, on the other hand, is already a part of the city and looks to the future when "he points to the newly refurbished Wembley Stadium in the north" (152) with his eyes "firmly fixed on the football stadium" (153). This attitude of a migrant descendant character can be seen as an attempt of the novel to decentre the meaning of what these sites commemorate. In relation to sites of memory Nora points out that

> [i]t is the nostalgic dimension of these devotional institutions that makes them seem beleaguered and cold - they mark the rituals of a society without ritual; integral particularities in a society that levels particularity; signs of distinction and of group membership in a society that tends to recognize individuals only as identical and equal. (12)

In this sense, the sites of memory in Keith's London tour can be seen as markers of distinction to Keith. As a second-generation black British, he is aware of the difference between what the history of the empire means to a white British person and the immigrant populations. These sites of memory are indicators of "the living memory-culture of the past" (Winter 315). In this respect, his outlook is in line with Earl's sense of unbelonging. When Earl's generation arrives in Britain with preconceived ideas of the motherland, they expect to be welcomed as insiders. They hold on to the shared collective images of the empire that the motherland suggests but are excluded as non-British subjects. However, Laurie's position as a mixed-race boy feeling already at home around these sites suggests that migrancy is a part of both collective memory

and contemporary identity of the country. Evidently, Laurie does not care about what the sites connote about the legacy of the empire. His indifference undermines the importance and relevance of the imperial legacy to the new generations who tend to form identifications beyond established categories. It also offers new transcultural trajectories formed in contemporary British society and allows for a revision of the notion of Britishness into a more inclusive form. Laurie is not an alienated immigrant. His generation inscribes itself within the memory of the nation. Quite significantly, by emphasizing Laurie's sense of belonging, Phillips explores the position of the black British subject as no longer marginal but involved in reinterpreting the perceived meaning of the embodiments of nation from the position of an insider. The novel portrays London as a metropolis where its collective memory is embraced by third-generation migrants, and thereby extends its boundaries to transcultural connections. As such, the novel illustrates the transformation of collective memory by the transcultural links foregrounded by the third-generation black British character. In relation to memory today, Misztal claims that "with diversity of cultures, ethnicities, religions and traditions, we are witnessing the fragmentation of national memory" (18). Through the novel's portrayal of various ways of belonging and references to the sites of memory, national memory becomes fragmented and involved with memories of diverse cultures. In this way, sites of memory are subjected to "revision" by different groups who transform the dominant representations of the past to seek ways of "asserting their own identity" (Olick and Robbins 122). This is a dynamic process through which some sites lose their cultural significance or gain new cultural associations. Migrant groups ascribe new meanings to these sites not as remnants of the empire, but as parts of history which their generations have also contributed to. Through various social and political practices that are involved in transcultural transmission between generations, national meaning of sites of memory is transformed to become more inclusive. By highlighting the difference of the sense of belonging and attachment of the two characters of migrant descent, the novel renders manifest this transformation in cultural identifications.

However, Phillips is ambivalent in his attitude towards the change as he is in the previous novels. The novel, through its fragmented structure and nonlinear

narrative, juxtaposes the social transformation exemplified in Laurie's generation with the persistence of imperial legacy in the economic migrants' situation to suggest that things have not much changed. The hopeful atmosphere that hints at a post-racial possibility is challenged by the moments that illustrate the predicament of Eastern European immigrants. Most significantly, Earl and Rolf's disillusionments echo each other and lay bare the parallelisms in the experience of different migrant communities such as European migrants and migrants of African descent. For instance, Rolf complains about England to Keith as follows:

> Why should the English police care what one foreigner does to another foreigner? … I will tell you the truth, English attitudes disappoint me. Do you know what it is like to stand in a shop with money in your pocket and discover that nobody wants to serve you? Telling you with their eyes before you are even asking for anything. Do you know what this is like or how it feels? The man points to his head. Can you imagine this? (198)

Rolf is able to "pay for the stinking room" he lives in only if he gets "a second job as a cleaner" and he thinks "this is not civilised even if it is how the English do it" (197). Likewise, although taken place decades earlier, the post-war migrants' account is given towards the end of the novel to emphasize that the living conditions the migrants are exposed have not improved. Revisiting the past, Earl describes his frustration at his place: "I follow him into the attic room and wait while he scratches round for the light switch. Having turn on the bulb the fall down on a single bed and point to a mattress in the corner and tell me I must sleep there and be grateful I have a roof in England" (273). Echoing Rolf's thought on this "civilised" country, Ralph tells Earl that "a West Indian can't afford to be sensitive and decent in a country like this" (274). Earl and Baron still live in poor circumstances. This is particularly evident in Mandela Centre, a ghetto-like, "old people's home" that Earl and his migrant friends live in (175). Thus, Rolf and Earl have more in common than Keith and Earl do. Foregrounding such parallels, the novel expands its critique of British hostility towards immigrants from former colonies to contemporary immigrants from Eastern Europe. Therefore, their position as migrants connects them through similar experiences and cultural conditions. The narrative revisits the past in order to lay bare such transcultural links.

In relation to shared experiences that are seemingly disparate, Rothberg states that "remembrance both cuts across and binds together diverse spatial, temporal, and cultural sites" (*Multidirectional* 11). To depict the entanglement of such seemingly unlikely but common cultural experiences, Phillips deliberately disrupts the chronological order in the novel. The narratives of Rolf and Earl relate separate historical circumstances to emphasize the experience of displacement and marginalization. Their experience in Britain creates a transcultural link between migrant communities regardless of race and ethnicity. As such, the novel revisits separate historical periods and link them in a transcultural act of remembering. Yet, Although Keith is a black man of Afro-Caribbean descent, he emerges as a British man who exerts power on other immigrants and remains indifferent to their suffering. Keith fails to see the link between his father's and these migrants' experience and is unable to sympathize with the European migrants. He thinks Danuta is "Slavic" (62) and her surname is "the most jaw-breaking of Polish names; a chain of late consonants strung together with a total disregard for vowels" (86). He describes Danuta's friend, Rolf, as "a tall blond boy who is Germanic in appearance, but he could also be from anywhere in Scandinavia, or from one of the former Soviet countries" (86). He also refers to the exchange students he sees as "these foreigners" and criticizes their getting soaked under the rain as they do not carry umbrellas. Keith's othering of the European migrants on the grounds that they are non-British is reminiscent of the racist attitude to the post-war migrants in Britain. By positioning them as the outsiders, Keith aligns himself with the hegemonic power. As such, the novel opens up a space to contest the limited interpretations of culture, race, and heritage. Keith is beyond the horizon of migrant experience that would connect him to his father's memories. As such, the novel challenges collective memory stabilized within specific boundaries as the marker of cultural belonging. This connection between migrant communities and Keith's exclusionary attitude demonstrates that rather than collective memory that is formed by dominant powers such as nation-states, shared experiences form common consciousness across decades.

The novel also highlights the disparity in their experience of racism. Laurie explains, "[y]ou can get stabbed in this town for just looking at someone in the wrong

way" (211). Laurie is more concerned about his peers and his position within his circle of friends than the police brutality or systemic racism. Yet, as Phillips notes "Britain remains a country for whom a sense of continuity with an imagined past continues to be a major determinant of national identity" ("Extravagant" 296). The three generations of diaspora illustrated in the novel seem to embody three different perspectives, which Ledent describes as "migratory, diasporic and global" (166). But as she notes, such a classification is challenged by the novel itself because "the novel's main focalizer" Keith's "discourse of diaspora" is dominant compared to the other perspectives (166). As the novel unfolds, we learn about Earl and Laurie but it is conveyed as if Earl's generation is dying out and what Laurie's generation might expect from the future is ambivalent. Yet, all members of the diaspora from different generations experience similar problems and share a culture of diaspora. Phillips comments on the third-generation as follows:

> They will find obstacles, they will find problems, and they will solve them their own way. If they need your help, or they need my help, they will ask, but they will come across issues and problems that are exactly the same as you had to deal with, exactly the same things I had to deal with. They may find different solutions, and they may be more subtle, they may be more pragmatic about it, but they will come across the same problems. (641)

In line with this, despite the fact that things have been changing in contemporary British society as portrayed in the novel, Phillips suggests that racism still persists in different forms. Unlike McLeod, Ledent thinks that the novel is not that optimistic in its portrayal of contemporary England. As she convincingly argues, race is still a persistent matter to determine identities:

> The three protagonists of *In the Falling Snow* are still to some extent judged by the colour of their skin, more than by the content of their characters. This discrimination may no longer be life-threatening, as it was in the 1960s when Ralph, Earl's friend, was killed by Teddy Boys, but it is nonetheless real and should prevent any form of complacency as to the progress that has been made over three generations. ("Mind"186).

It remains almost the same for the second generation. Annabelle's father remembers a neighbour asked him about his "nigger-lover" daughter. After ten years he visits her daughter and tells her:

> You see, Annabelle, I received a note, anonymous of course, shortly after we last saw you in Bristol. In your salad days, as it were. Your mother may have mentioned something to somebody at bridge, or perhaps I blabbed to Walter or Barry in the pub, but some chap, or woman for that matter, wanted to know what it was like to have a "niggerlover" for a daughter. He wrote that he hopped I would never have the ill manners to pollute our village with my mongrel family. Now then, what do you make of that? (24)

His remarks such as "pollution" and "mongrel family" (26) suggesting the persistence of the myth of purity signifies that nothing has changed much. In this sense, the novel is ambivalent in its portrayal of the change because racism still persists in contemporary Britain. For instance, even though race does not seem to be the determiner of identity, Keith encounters a racist attitude from his boss: "Black rage … where you get all loud and illogical" (249). Likewise, racism has not been washed away; Keith finds out that he "had other names beside Keith, most commonly 'chocolate drop'" (207) and when he was a child, "boys pelted [Laurie] with stones and called him a 'halfie'" (16). When examined closely, it is evident that racism continues to plague contemporary Britain in various ways as social frameworks shift.

Although the novel features post-racial possibilities, it remains a distinct possibility as the past is still alive in this contemporary depiction of cosmopolitan London. Therefore, the novel engages with socio-cultural realities, which show race still matters in contemporary identity politics. Although Laurie's generation does not construct their identity upon racial relations, they encounter racism. For instance, even his grandparents on his mother's side "had not anticipated somebody like Laurie entering their lives" (221). When Keith and Annabelle have to "face the annoying Mr. Hughes", the headmaster of the school, he speaks as if for Laurie "university is something that he might miss out on" because of his having been involved in "[s]hoplifting and brawling" and his "time spent under investigation in a police station" (220). Keith thinks the reason for the headmaster's attitude is Laurie's race. When Keith reacts to the headmaster making it clear that "Laurie's not in a gang or doing drugs" and states that "I feel like we're being lectured, and I'm not too happy about it, okay?" (221), Mr. Hughes further infuriates Keith by saying: "[c]ertain lifestyles are more attractive to juveniles, and there's no denying the cultural cachet of

the ethnic way of life" (221). Keith is familiar with this kind of racism; therefore, he suspects his son's being discriminated against at school.

It is also notable that the fathers and sons are not that different from each other. Laurie has the same problems and dangers waiting for him on the streets. Some details render the novel more realistic in its portrayal of intergenerational relations. For instance, just as his father, Keith is usually a silent figure and not much open to conversation. He has a favourite bar, the Queen Caroline, which "is one of the local pubs left in west London that has refused to capitulate to the sawdust-on-the-floor and alcopop trend, so at the best of times there are only a handful of ageing drinkers in the place" (35). What attracts him to this bar is the "melancholy, almost nostalgic, ambience" (35). Likewise, Earl has a favourite pub which "appears to have been abandoned by all but a few drinkers" and "the only thing that might cause his father to vary his routine would be cricket" (167). As for another instance, Laurie is described as "sucking his teeth" (162), which is a common expression used by the Caribbeans to show disapproval. Laurie sees his father as a "weirdo" (121) just like Keith sees Earl "in danger of embracing a premature inertia" because of his seclusion to "television and pub" (167). Similarly, to Keith, his father is "somebody whose stubborn behaviour so successfully obscures whatever sensitive or vulnerable qualities he may possess" (49). However, he does not share what happens in his life with anyone either. Just as Keith finds it difficult to make sense of his son's attachment to the city, Earl thinks his son has become an Englishman who has no sense of roots. When they are sitting in a park his father notices that Keith does not get cold and says: "You're like a true Englishman able to sit out here without a hat or scarf and acting like the weather ain't bothering you at all" (174). He also reacts in the same way when they drink tea in the hospital:

> "You see what I've turned into? A bloody Englishman sharing a cup tea of tea and a biscuit with you."
> "Nothing wrong with a cup of tea."
> "So, I have a son who thinks that there is nothing wrong with an English cup of tea" (266).

He thinks Keith should feel alienated. However, Keith's attachment to race relations in the past is reflected in his behaviour differently towards other people. He is aware

of the judging looks of the people around because of his skin colour but he is judgemental towards people, too. He judges Yvette because of her underpants: "he [cannot] find the words to fully express his disdain for the crass vulgarity of this silly piece of string" (5). He also judges her by the TV shows she likes and her taste of music, which he defines as "a discordant cacophony" with "mindless lyrics" (12). Also, while he is being judged by Annabelle's father, he has the same contempt for the European migrants. He also has a stereotypical outlook towards his family. To him, Annabelle is unable to help Laurie as she is white. And Laurie has problems just because he is mixed-race. He is still conscious about racial and ethnic markers as he observes her girlfriend's face; he thinks to himself Yvette's "heritage is most evident in the battle between Europe and Africa that is being waged on her face where full lips and emerald green eyes compete for attention" (6). He categorizes people according to their sameness and difference and he is aware of which part of the city is "less than friendly" (55). When Keith meets Danuta, he offers her his umbrella as an emblem and a part of "a key part of the English uniform" (86) and Danuta addresses him "you English people" (97). She does not situate him as an outsider to the nation. Keith on the other hand, sees her as a naive immigrant woman. To Keith, her name is "romantic" (86) her "face is strangely angelic" (62). In fact, she is highly manipulative and capable of victimizing others. As Rolf tells Keith, she is married with three children in Warsaw and she robbed Rolf. And unlike what Keith imagines about her, she thinks England is a "stupid country with crazy rules" (66). Keith claims membership to "Englishness" when he is around migrants like Danuta and Rolf but he does this by downgrading them. He recreates hierarchies to feel superior. In this sense, Keith's infantilization of the European migrants and acting as an Englishman who holds a superior position can be seen as performative because he feels he is also the outsider. As the narrative unfolds, it becomes clearer why he feels that way; he has encountered racism and been reminded by the society that he is "black" since his childhood. He walks in the street feeling the "curious half-glances" (3) upon him and it is the white gaze that positions him as a black man who does not belong.

Even Keith's attempts to reach out to the roots of black music is something he feels he must do as a black man. He feels disconnected from the black cultural heritage;

therefore, he wants to write a book about "how black cultural heritage is passed on from one generation to the next" (90). For Gilroy, music functions as a bridge between black cultures on both sides of the Atlantic, allowing them to interconnect with the legacy of slavery (*The Black Atlantic* 200). It is a mnemonic medium through which ideas and experiences travel across time and space. Thus, Keith's book project, which is a reflection of his need to reconnect with ancestral memories, requires transcending cultural and generational particularity and exploring trajectories of different historical affiliations. It is built upon constructing a cultural genealogy that uncovers the transcultural memory across the black Atlantic. To reach out to a "substantial tradition of cultural inheritance" he feels "he has to look across the Atlantic for his models" (90) and to learn more about their transcultural connection. His attempt to draw a parallel between "Cissy Houston and Whitney Houston, and of course, Whitney's aunt, Dionne Warwick" (135) lays bare the interconnectedness of "American soul music with his British identity" (Erll, "Fictions" 120). On the other hand, his search for these connections with the roots disappoints him. Music is the emblem of the black Atlantic exchange of culture and identity and a product of transcultural memory. However, Keith cannot make "any progress" (135) with his book because, as Ledent points out, "the diasporic outlook adopted by Keith as main focalizer is somehow shown to fail, perhaps because of its tendency to idealize or simplify the past and to cut him off from the reality around him" ("Mind" 167). Thus, he has difficulty to understand his son and the contemporary reality of multicultural London. In his efforts to do research on black cultural heritage, he ignores the complex background of the musical culture and its present reflections. His project is on the music of "the sixties, the seventies and the eighties" (61) leaving out the more recent genres such as hip-hop which is "not a new generation of music, but the evidence of a general cultural malaise" (12) to him because he disregards what teenagers enjoy nowadays.

Keith's ignorance and neglect of the present realities around him might stem from his missing a part of cultural identity which can only be fixed by his father. Earl's insistence on his silence is the reason for the disconnection of the transmission of memory because "[h]is father's silence has meant that his son has never been able to properly explain himself to anybody" (266). Earlier in the novel when his father was

moving into the Mandela Centre, Keith discovers a box full of photographs taken "shortly after his arrival in England" (165). These photos function as remnants of his roots and his idea of "home": "unlike the pots and dishes ... have considerable weight … He can't bring himself to pick them up, or even touch them" (266). But he notices his father's happiness in the pictures in which he and his Caribbean friends are in a cultural connection and Keith sees for the first time "what he imagines to be the spirit of their Caribbean youth" (175). The photographs do not only mediate memories of home but also his transculturality. Keith only gets to know more about his father's generation and suffering he had to endure towards the end of the novel when Earl is about to die. His access to the memories of the post-war migrants empowers him. However, rather than helping Keith to situate himself in a place in black diaspora, his encounter with the accounts of the past makes him see the differences. At the end of the novel, he comes to see that "his father has gone and there is nobody ahead of him…He feels…vulnerable. Small" (304). After years of estrangement, they finally have a chance to form a bond and Earl's deathbed monologue is the source of cultural heritage and memory to which Keith can finally feel connected. Keith reflects his own desire to connect with the past on Laurie because he thinks his son is struggling with the challenges of being black and British and absence of roots that would lead to purposelessness. He finds it difficult to come to terms with his father and son whose voices do not seem to comply with the ideal image of being black in Keith's conception of black diaspora and thereby Keith fails to finish his book. Laurie says to his father: "Get real, Dad" (122) when he relates every problem in Laurie's life to his being mixed-race. Keith thinks what is real is the "leafy suburbs of London where the presence of a man like him still attracts curious half-glances" (3). This generational outlook keeps him from adopting different perspectives to analyse different genres of music, too. It is not easy for him and his generation to throw off the burden of racial identification.

Phillips deliberately denies his reader a conclusive ending but, maybe, as explained by Laurie, "[i]t's not always as simple as it looks" (153). The novel raises questions with regard to the established categories but does not offer solutions with its ambivalent but realistic tone. At the end of the novel, Keith stays in their former home

with Anabelle, but when he stares at the picture of Annabelle's parents on the table, he thinks "[t]here is no reason for him to spend a night here in this small terraced house with all these people" (308). When it is juxtaposed with Earl's seclusion, as Collier claims, "[i]t seems that the cycle of reclusion is about to repeat itself" (404). Yet, it is also hinted that, especially after Earl's death, Keith may change this pattern of lack of communication between fathers and sons as he decides to spend more time with his son. This can be taken as a transformative effect of the past on the present. What starts as a contemporary metropolitan narrative of a middle class black British man is expanded into the history of the transcultural movement of black diaspora and transfigured to include generational memory. Laurie's moving beyond the boundaries of the black diaspora and Keith's inclusion and sense of belonging to the nation both foreground and challenge the primacy of race in contemporary identity politics. The tone of the novel is optimistic in its engagement with emergent political realities but it portrays Britain as still inhospitable to immigrant communities as it was in the post-war era. Yet, the transcultural Eastern European trajectories offer a revision of nationalist discourses. In this broad perspective dealing with three different generations as well as new immigrants, the novel hints at new possibilities for the emergence of identities beyond racial categories. Picturing a more recent experience of the black diaspora and Britain, which is less concerned with race and racial identity but more concerned with class and hierarchies in an increasingly global order, the novel contributes to a new perspective on identity concepts and race relations.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Caryl Phillips's *Crossing the River*, *A Distant Shore*, and *In the Falling Snow* illustrate that the past persists in the present as a force that shapes the cultural dynamics and racial politics in Britain. This study has argued that in these novels Phillips foregrounds the transcultural memory of Britain, crossing across spatial and temporal boundaries, to contest the nativist discourses and offers a fluid notion of individual and national identity. The concept of transcultural memory and Paul Gilroy's "transcultural reconceptualization" (*The Black Atlantic* 17) of the black Atlantic offer complementary theoretical frameworks to analyse Phillips's works as they both provide insight into an analysis of the formative role of the black peoples' movement across the Atlantic in the construction of their identities. By considering the black Atlantic as a medium that creates the transcultural memory of Britain, the theoretical foundation of this study offers a new perspective to Phillips scholarship.

The persistence of the imperial past that involves the Middle Passage, colonialism, decolonization, and post-war migration brings to the fore the memory dimension in Phillips's novels. Particularly with the spreading of multiculturalism and the increasing interest in the role of the past in the shaping of the present, memory studies have taken a transcultural turn to overcome the previous primacy of the national framework in the field. Astrid Erll's idea that memory "travels" ("Travelling" 11) enables the articulation of the consequences of the historical atrocities within contemporary societies. As it is demonstrated in this study, the selected novels chart the evolution of black British diasporic experience and migratory trajectories across the black Atlantic. The novels also emphasize the transformation of the social positioning of black people in Britain through the ages. Phillips conceptualizes "diaspora identity" through his characters crossing the Atlantic by drawing attention to the multiplicity of stories, the plurality of voices, and the continuing cultural

exchange and hybridity across shifting boundaries. Accordingly, memories are carried through this journey and form a bridge between roots and routes of diaspora experience. All three novels analysed in this study draw attention to the construction of identity upon such experience and challenge essentialist understandings of identity, culture, and nation by excavating migratory trajectories and positing new routes for the black diaspora.

Britain's entangled histories and cultural links with other territories of the black Atlantic are uncovered by its transcultural memory, which is ignored by British nativist discourses because they are based on an exclusionary idea of Britishness assuming the validity of one version of the received history of Britain, dismissing the accounts of the past which involve the atrocities of colonialism, slavery, and the dissolvement of the empire. These memories of the "loss of imperial prestige" bring "shame" to the nation and embody "complexities and ambiguities" that British society attributes to the arrival of immigrant communities (Gilroy, *After* 98). Consequently, transcultural connections with postcolonial peoples have been disregarded in the nativist construction of the image of Britishness, which favours a white, homogeneous community with a shared collective past.

In order to contest this notion of the nation, Phillips explores the evolution of the notion of black Britishness in the prejudiced social milieu of both strict rural areas and contemporary metropolitan cities. Migration and the emergence of transcultural links help transform the established notions and shift focus from national and cultural homogeneity to diversity. As manifested by transcultural forms of mobility in his works, identity cannot be seen as a self-enclosed entity. In this way, he reconceptualizes the received notions of British identity, revising the established racial models of nation and its relation to immigrants. This study reveals that in the selected novels, Phillips deconstructs this image of national purity by drawing attention to the movement of memory across time and space to lay bare the historical roots of racism and hostility towards the black diaspora.

This study has also demonstrated that Phillips's fiction contributes to the discussion of transcultural memory and its effects on the construction of black diasporic identities as well as on the undermining of the notions of nation as a pure,

stable, homogeneous category. All three novels engage with nationalist discourses to show that transcultural memory transcends "political, ethnic, linguistic, or religious borders" of the allegedly pure collectivity of communities, the constraints of nation states, and cultural particularities (Bond and Rapson 19). Phillips portrays movements of the black Atlantic memory across temporal and spatial borders and social, national, and cultural boundaries that constitute transcultural link between various locations. This study has mapped out the terrains of transcultural memory in the formation and evolution of the black diaspora and diasporic consciousness as expressed in Phillip's literary production. Relating the routes of the black people across the Atlantic to the transcultural memory constituted through migration, this dissertation has argued that such connection constructs the black diaspora identity and contests the exclusionary discourses. Phillips's novels provide a revision of Britishness through various identifications of migrant characters. As such, they offer new routes through which transcultural links are formed, which problematize essentialist, racist, nationalist discourses and practices.

It is observed that Phillips employs a mnemonic narrative strategy that involves fragmented narratives told by alternating narrators, from different time periods and settings. This strategy is enriched by characterization, unexpected encounters, and unlikely juxtapositions made possible by temporal shifts. While the plurality of voices offers multiple perspectives to the events, the juxtaposition of the past with the present shows the interconnectedness of seemingly disparate circumstances. It is illustrated in these novels that the British imperial legacy still persists in contemporary Britain and continues to stigmatize migrant societies. The nationalist discourse, constituted by this legacy, still claims for purity and excludes people from former colonies, who migrate to Britain as a consequence of Britain's colonial conduct, on the basis of race and ethnicity. Through this narrative strategy, the effects of transcultural memory are rendered visible to remind the reader of the cultural exchange and historical forces that have shaped contemporary Britain. Built on the idea that no nation or culture is pure or homogeneous, the novels emphasize that British cultural and national identity is constituted by its transcultural links that undermine any claims for cultural and national purity.

Crossing the River sets the scene for what is to come in the following novels by engaging critically with the history of the transatlantic slave trade. In the form of a frame narrative, the novel charts the roots of the African diaspora in the prologue and concludes with the routes in the epilogue. While the prologue pictures the roots and how African people move across the Atlantic, the epilogue refers to the transcultural connections and formation of diaspora identity beyond borders. Thus, through the movement of memory across the spaces of the triangular trade, the novel investigates the "chorus of common memory" of the black diaspora. It exposes the silenced voices beginning from the colonial past until the aftermath of World War II and thereby forms a transcultural connection between the black Atlantic territories as conceptualized by Gilroy. In his exploration of the entangled memory of the black Atlantic, Phillips shows that the history of slavery cannot be assigned only to black people; it involves white people, as well. To this end, he not only gives voice to the traders and slave owners as well as the victims of slavery but also juxtaposes the colonial perspective with the suffering of the slave descendants. However, Phillips deliberately avoids a blaming attitude in his depiction of the past; he rather cherishes unity by depicting an African father who embraces a white woman as one of his children. The remembrance of the Middle Passage and its consequences that resonate across centuries uncovers the cultural entanglements and enables the frameworks of identity, nation, and culture to be multiplied. As such, the novel transforms the established ideas on race and belonging.

A Distant Shore responds to the global contemporaneity of the twenty-first century by illustrating a refugee figure crossing the borders. Juxtaposing the stories of the African refugee and an Englishwoman, who become neighbours in a new settlement in the north of England, the novel not only suggests the entanglements of the histories of Africa and England, but also contests the claim for homogeneity of the townspeople who stand for the British society. Through the journey of the refugee, the intersecting histories of Africa and Britain are revealed as it gradually becomes clear that his hometown is a former colony, which has been destroyed by political unrest and tribal wars. His journey also enables a transcultural engagement with the complexities of identity formation. The protagonists of the novel negotiate with the

plurality of their identities in a setting where the global movements meet the local realities. The anti-immigration rhetoric of the local community is challenged by references to the past and the ethnically diverse population of the town. Thus, Phillips suggests a self-evident transcendence of the boundaries of the nation to demonstrate its heterogeneity. The refugee emerges as a reminder of the imperial past and its atrocities, those ignored by the nationalist discourse that shapes the collective identity. Furthermore, the novel presents Britain as an already fractured country, where white citizens may also feel a sense of unbelonging, as it is divided into two even in a local rural area. The cross-border reach of memories through the refugee's journey uncovers these realities that are disregarded by the nationalist discourse. In doing so, the novel transforms the assumed collectivity and offers further possibilities for a consideration of an alternative, more inclusive cultural and national identity.

In the Falling Snow follows diasporic trajectories and contemporary migratory patterns in cosmopolitan London through its portrayal of the three generations of black diaspora. The novel explores the black cultural heritage and how it is disrupted because of the imperial legacy. The Windrush generation and the hostility they encounter in England illuminates the contemporary problems the second generation faces. However, it gives us a sense of changing cultural conditions of the black diaspora experience that is revealed through the mixed-race third generation character who has a different kind of attachment to Britain. This time, the roots appear to be not that determinant in the formation of identity. His identity is shaped by multiple transcultural influences, which is in line with the cultural transformation in Britain. Philips expands his exploration of this transformation by incorporating Eastern European migrants into the story. The encounter between the protagonist with the economic migrants from Eastern Europe reveals that race is emphasized less than class and citizenship in social hierarchies. While the past is still alive in the present, as represented by the sense of unbelonging of the Windrush generation and persistent racism in society, the novel gestures towards a post-racial society in its depiction of the similarities between the experience of the post-war migrants and new economic migrants. Yet, although racial identity markers are disappearing, hierarchies are

always destined to persist. As such, Phillips's writing suggests the emergence of new paradigmatic trajectories in his re-imagining of contemporary Britain.

The plots of these novels appear to succeed one another in the sense that where *Crossing the River* leaves the story in the aftermath of World War II, Gabriel/Solomon's journey from Africa in *A Distant Shore* takes the routes to contemporary England mirroring the journey of the siblings, and in *In the Falling Snow* the story goes on with the Afro-Caribbean immigrant generations. In the post-war era, Earl and his friends migrate to Britain constituting the Windrush generation. As for Keith and his son, they form different kinds of attachment to Britishness. All these characters can be considered as the African father's children whom he talks about in his epilogue in *Crossing the River*. In this regard, it is observed in this study that these works trace the lines of connection across generations of the black diaspora and British society outlining how the transcultural movement of memory has shaped these relations and constructed diaspora identity.

Phillips introduces broken familial lineage in all three novels. The reason for this disruption in families is shown to be the imperial legacy. Thus, he employs the voice of the African father and depicts him selling his children to slavery in the first novel, thereby setting the tone of the succeeding novels in which the dispersal is both lamented and cherished. It is reminiscent of Gilroy's notion of the black Atlantic; the dispersal disconnects people from their roots but also offers them transcultural identities and new routes to take (*The Black Atlantic* 17). In this way, the act of border crossing provides "mnemonic routes" and constitutes a site of memory for identity formation (Erll, *Memory* 66). Memory offers dialogue with the past and reveals its persistence in the current relationships as exemplified in these novels. Therefore, as observed in the identity formation of the characters, diaspora identity cannot be conceptualized as an essentialized entity; it is fluid and established upon a set of geographical and temporal connections.

In his exploration of these connections, Phillips makes use of water imagery. In his works, water emerges as a zone of transcultural memory. Diverse memories of peoples crossing the Atlantic are entangled in this zone that provides them with a space of diaspora trajectories. Crossing the Atlantic is a journey that brings along dangers,

disperses people, and destroys families but, at the same time, it navigates the memories of fractured lives. Thus, the metaphor of the "crossing" organizes the historical and territorial networks that constitute fluid identities and cultural formations. It also suggests the possibility of new affiliations beyond exclusive conceptions of culture. Drawing upon the ebb-and-flow movement of water, Phillips draws attention to the fluidity of identity and dynamic connections of cultures across the Atlantic. In this way, his works contribute to transforming the discourse on nation and belonging in the wake of increasing globalisation and mnemonic movements beyond the nation-states.

The analyses of the selected novels have shown that Phillips's oeuvre is characterized by a consistent engagement with the issues of identity, home, dislocation, and fragmentation regardless of the setting and an ongoing exploration of how past shapes present. His literary production engages with the existing paradigms of black cultural politics and reckons with emerging concerns looking towards a post-racial future. His works seek to deconstruct the nativist and national approaches to these issues because of the lack of representation in the racially homogeneous received history of Britain. The characters he creates are those who are excluded and marginalized throughout history. He portrays a diasporic community with a shared experience of a sense of unbelonging, alienation, and homelessness but this common experience does not construct a single homogeneous community. Rather, his works bring to the fore the fluidity of identity and the impossibility of rootedness by probing similar concerns from different angles. Phillips's social and political criticism goes one step further than simply portraying the evolution of the black diaspora. Thematically, his concerns shift to the contemporary problems stemming from the historical baggage of the imperial past. Thus, topics such as identity, otherness, and migration are still prevalent in his latest work.

Phillips's concern with alienation and dislocation has also expanded to examine a more extensive territory since ways of cultural identification in contemporary Britain has considerably become more complex. He envisions increasingly complex and layered feelings and relationships between characters and situations. While *Crossing the River* deals more with the feelings of rootlessness because of the loss of Africa as homeland in the face of the slave trade, in *A Distant*

Shore the protagonist is a refugee who leaves the war-torn Africa to find a safe haven in Britain. Therefore, he is not only frustrated but also feels estranged as he tries to adapt to a new life. His identity formation is more complex because he is both the persecutor as a soldier in his hometown and a victim who faces racism and is killed by a racist gang. As for *In the Falling Snow*, while Earl as a post-war migrant still feels bitterness and indignation due to the frustrating society he encounters in Britain, his son Keith goes through identity crisis as he feels he does not completely belong in Britain; yet, he cannot identify with his father's Caribbean roots, either. Laurie as a mixed-race teenager has not experienced the anti-racist struggle his father's generation did. His attachment to Britain embodies a transforming genealogy of race in Britain. Phillips's engagement with contemporary portrayal of black diaspora becomes more extensive as his more recent works reveal. Therefore, it can be held that Phillips's oeuvre is marked by a shift from an emphasis on slavery and colonial legacy to questions of global frameworks and more complex layers of cultural belonging beyond the confines of the black diaspora.

Phillips acknowledges the realities that mark social divisions and rejects the impulses towards wish-fulfilment. He avoids simply providing a utopian hopefulness in his depiction of a society where race is less emphasized in social hierarchies. The nationalist discourse based on an assessment of difference and sameness is still alive as is also evident in the attitudes of the racist characters he portrays in his novels. His envisioning of future operates in dynamic interplay, complicating cultural identities. His works respond to the cultural presence of race in the face of class-based relations and rapidly changing social dynamics. Transcultural mobilities of peoples and information have changed the quality of contemporary living. Although the historical baggage still continues to plague social relations, race is not the major determinant of belonging. Thus, his recent depiction of Britain is in line with Sara Upstone's observation that there has been a shift in racial identifications in response to recent global events (4). Phillips glimpses at a post-racial future and is hopeful about it, but his works do not feature an idealised utopian society which is unaware of the realities of the world; he acknowledges the present tensions and their continual effects on society. The notion of the post-racial emerges solely in the last novel analysed in this

study, but it should be added that Phillips renders it problematic and incomplete because the imperial legacy still persists in this envisioning of the future.

It has also been observed that the novels end with an ambivalent note. Phillips's ambivalence stems from his fiction's attachment to reasonable possibilities. Although Phillips suggests hopeful reconciliations, the circumstances shaped by the nationalist discourse do not seem likely to change in the near future. He does not simply answer the questions he raises; rather, he discloses what has been ignored to challenge the established notions, but, with a gesture towards hope, his works call for a change in the perception of the past as well as the present. Therefore, his engagement with memory stems from an ethical imperative. He believes that ambiguity is to be celebrated because it provides "the puzzling grey area and remind[s] us that those old loyalties and certainties are, in our modern world, subject to fluidity and transformation irrespective of what the authorities above us … might have us believe" ("Confessions"). It is his way of unsettling the established categorisations and expectations of the reader. The capacity of his narrative fiction to accommodate this complexity is evident in the characterization, plot, and narrative structure of the novels. Phillips believes in the capacity of fiction "to wrench us out of our ideological burrows and force us to engage with a world that is clumsily transforming itself" ("Color" 16). Thus, he creates ambiguity that makes the reader think more deeply about the situations. The plurality of ideas, unlikely encounters between characters of different cultural backgrounds, and temporal shifts are a part of this thought-provoking strategy and his efforts to contribute to social transformation.

By placing Phillips's fiction within the theoretical frameworks of transcultural memory and Gilroy's notion of the black Atlantic, this study has argued that the movement of the transcultural memory of the black Atlantic across national borders draws attention to the plurality of identity and contests nativist discourses. Memories are constructive of both individual and national identities in the texts analysed. The juxtaposition of black and white identities in Phillips's explorations of historical roots of racism, displacement, and sense of unbelonging sheds light on both the effect of past on the present realities and the transcultural connections between Britain and the black Atlantic territories that are established as a consequence of Britain's colonial

conduct. To demonstrate this connection, Phillips introduces characters such as emancipated slaves, a black GI, a refugee from Africa, generations of migrants from the Caribbean alongside slave traders, lonely and estranged white women, racist murderers, and white women married to black British men, which all illustrate the diversity of the diaspora experience and its interrelatedness with the white population. Memory functions as a bridge between past and present, interweaving such relations and serves to provide for the voices, events, and connections that have been disregarded by nationalist discourses. By offering an understanding of the effects of memories transcending the seemingly impermeable borders, his works remind us of the ignored aspects of history and offer an understanding of its contemporary consequences. As such, reading Phillips's literary production from the perspective of recent developments in transcultural memory studies alongside related areas of diaspora studies, this study has carried out a thorough analysis of Phillips's work and has attempted to provide conclusions that go beyond established theoretical insights into the texts analysed.

Phillips's fiction could also be studied in line with the recent socio-political developments and configurations in Britain. Given that *In the Falling Snow*, which is his latest novel on contemporary Britain, was published in 2009, his emphasis on class as the primary determinant in social hierarchies can be considered in relation to the global financial crisis of the period. However, a lot has changed since then that has shattered almost all the hopeful possibilities for a post-racial society. The prejudice and disparities characterizing British society found expression in its demand for departure from the European Union in the Brexit referendum held in 2016. Brexit, which officially came into force in 2020, can be viewed as an outcome of the nostalgia for the empire. It has triggered racist discourses and has caused changes in British immigration policy that led to the Windrush Scandal in 2018, which is the deportation of many Windrush migrants from the country on grounds that they did not prove their legal status. The anti-immigration rhetoric and racist violence have left people from minority groups fearful about their status in the country. Evidently, past conceptions of imperial identity have re-emerged and become more visible. In a recent interview, Phillips interprets this turbulent political time as follows:

> The whole debate around who belongs and who doesn't, feels like we're going back in time rather than moving forward, so it's depressing. It sounds somewhat obvious to say it, but it feels rather depressing because we all like to think we learn from history and we learn from our mistakes and we correct them, and we move forward. … But I don't think countries operate in that way, I think they do stupid things, they get over it, they forget about it, and they do it again. That seems to be a pattern that we're in right now. ("Interview" n.pag.)

His rightful pessimism and the recent social, cultural, and political developments could be the subject of future studies on Phillips's work. Furthermore, following the Black Lives Matter movement, which started in 2013 in the United States and has become a global movement since, many protestors have challenged systemic racism and violence against black people all over the world. In Britain, it led to further protests particularly against the imperial legacy that nourishes the essentialist nationalism of the country. In 2020, the protestors brought down the statues that commemorate the slave traders Edward Colston and Robert Milligan. More significantly, the statue of Colston was replaced with a sculpture, called "A Surge of Power", of Jen Reid, who is one of the local protestors. The movement, signalling the remediation of memory in relation to changing social frameworks, is clearly an attempt to question the role of nationalist discourses and practices in the construction and maintenance of collective memory through monuments. Thus, this act of commemoration also gives evidence to the transformation of the collective memory of the country. In line with this, further studies could be conducted to inquire into how sites of colonial memory have become sites of contestation of national identity in Britain.

To conclude, Phillips's novels underline the multiple trajectories of migration, which come to the fore through transcultural memory and signify fractured histories, and raise social awareness about the repressed aspects of history. Memory acts as a mediator that demands a responsible revision of the past for hopeful possibilities in contemporary social relationships in his work. It urges the reader to question their own assumptions about race, identity, and nation. Philips gestures towards an emphatic identification with his imaginative creations that make us familiar with various characters and situations, intersecting threads of identity, and hybrid sites of allegiance. His fiction forges an emphatic response to cultural otherness and foregrounds the importance of maintaining humanitarian values by urging the reader

to recognize the constructedness of the dividing lines of borders. As Phillips notes, "[a]s long as we have literature as a bulwark against intolerance, and as a force for change, then we have a chance" ("Color" 16).

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APPENDICES

A. CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Surname, Name: Kırpıklı, Deniz
Nationality: Turkish (TC)
email: d.kirpikli@gmail.com

EDUCATION

Degree	Institution	Year of Graduation
MA	Hacettepe University, English Language and Literature	2013
BA	Ankara University, English Language and Literature	2008

WORK EXPERIENCE

Year	Place	Enrollment
2015-Present	Başkent University	Research Assistant
2011-2015	Başkent University	Instructor

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English (Advanced), French (Intermediate)

PUBLICATIONS

1. Kırpıklı, Deniz. "Irony and (Dis)Obedience to Authority in Julian Barnes's *The Noise of Time*." *Çankaya University Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, vol.14, no. 2, 2020, pp: 263-276.

2. Kırpıklı, Deniz. "The Principle of Beauty: The Gothic in John Keats's *Isabella; or, the Pot of Basil*." *Ankara Üniversitesi DTCF Dergisi,* vol. 59, no. 1, 2019, pp: 203-216.

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4. Kırpıklı, Deniz. “Non-essentialist Conception of Migrant Identity in Zadie Smith's *White Teeth*.” *Interactions,* vol. 26, no. 1-2, 2017, pp: 117-128.

5. Kırpıklı, Deniz. “Virginia Woolf'un *Deniz Feneri* Romanında Zaman Kavramı.” Edited by Canan Uğurdağ. *Edebi Metinlerde Zaman Kavramına Dair İncelemeler.* Gazi Yayınevi, 2016, pp: 167-178.

B. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Bir romancı, oyun yazarı ve deneme yazarı olan Caryl Phillips, en üretken çağdaş yazarlardan biridir. Phillips tüm ulusal kimlik etiketlerine direnmesine rağmen, farklı kültürel bağlılıklara sahip ikinci kuşak siyahi bir İngiliz yazar olarak tanınır. 1958'de Doğu Karayipler'deki St. Kitts adasında doğan ve ailesi, o sadece birkaç aylıkken İngiltere'ye göç eden Phillips, çocukluğunu Leeds'te beyaz, işçi sınıfı ailelerin yaşadığı bir bölgede geçirir. Ten rengi nedeniyle ötekileştirilerek ve dışlanmışlık duygusu ile büyüyen Phillips'in çocukluğu boyunca tek sığınağı kitaplar olmuştur. Başlangıçta psikoloji alanında eğitim almak isterken daha sonra Oxford Üniversitesi'nde İngiliz Edebiyatı okur. 1980'lerin sonunda İngiltere'den ayrıldıktan sonra New York'ta yaşamaya başlayan Phillips çok sayıda üniversitede ders vermiştir. Bu süreçte Karayip tarihi ve ailesinin geçmişi ile ilgili keşifleri aracılığıyla ve yaptığı sayısız seyahatler sonucunda Afrika, İngiltere ve Amerika'yı kimliğini oluşturan kültürel zenginliğin bir parçası olarak kabul eder. Seyahatleri, kimlik inşasının dinamik bir süreç olduğunu ve bu sürecin aslında modern, kültürel ve etnik açıdan farklılıklar barındıran toplumlarda yaşamanın bir getirisi olduğunu düşünmesinde etkilidir. Phillips'in geçmişe, özellikle Britanya'daki siyahi diasporanın tarihine olan ilgisi, edebi üretiminin önemli yönlerinden biridir. Bu nedenle, eserlerinin ilgi odağında yalnızca çağdaş İngiliz toplumunda ırk, sınıf ve göç gibi sosyokültürel konular değil, kölelik tarihi ve sömürgeciliğin kalıcı mirasından mevcut göç meselelerinin köklerine kadar uzanan geniş bir tarihsel bağlam vardır. Eserlerinde işlediği kimlik, ulus, bellek, aidiyet, yer değiştirme gibi konuların farklı zaman ve mekanlardaki yansımalarını bir araya getirerek bu temaları anlatım biçiminde de öne çıkarır. Üretkenliği ve başarısı sayısız ödül ile mükafatlandırılan Phillips şimdiye kadar on bir roman, dört tiyatro oyunu, beş deneme kitabı, iki senaryo, bir radyo tiyatrosu ve iki cilt antoloji yazmıştır.

Phillips'in çoklu kültürel kimliğini oluşturan Afrika, Avrupa ve Amerika üçgeni aynı zamanda eserlerinin mekânsal odak noktasını oluşturur. Bu anlamda, Paul Gilroy tarafından kavramsallaştırılan siyah Atlantik topografyası, Phillips'in çalışmaları için önemli bir alandır. Transatlantik köle ticaretinin rotasını oluşturan bu

coğrafya özellikle siyahi diaspora için kimlik ve bellek kavramlarının oluşmasında büyük bir rol oynar. Bu coğrafyayı bölen sınırlar arasında yüz yıllardır süren hareketlilik Phillips'in çalışmalarında kültürel çeşitliliği besleyen bir deneyim ve yolculuk motifi olarak karşımıza çıkar. İngiliz milliyetçi söylemi farklı toplumları ırk bazında dışlayarak ideolojik ve emperyal tarih anlatılarına dayanan bir İngiliz kimliği gözetir. Phillips bu söylemde ırk ve etnisiteye kültürel ve ulusal kimliği belirlemede verilen önceliğe karşı çıkar ve eserlerinde kimliği istikrardan çok değişim ve dönüşümle ilişkilendirilen bir kavram olarak öne çıkarır. Bunu yaparken de kolektif ve kültürel bellekten ve kültürel alışverişin sınırlar ötesindeki hareketinden faydalanır. Bellek ve belleğin sınırlar ötesi hareketi kimliğin baskın söylemler tarafından sınırlandırıldığı kalıplar üzerinde yıkıcı etkiye sahiptir, çünkü bellek tarihin yazmadığı, ya da bilerek tarih yazım sürecinden dışlanmış olan anlatıları öne çıkarır. Bu nedenle Phillips eserlerinde tarih boyunca marjinalleştirilmiş figürlere ses vererek emperyal tarih anlatılarına bir alternatif yaratmak adına Britanya'nın transkültürel belleğine odaklanır. Kolektif bellekten dışlanmış karakterler yaratarak, kolektif belleği, transkültürel ilişkileri de içine dahil ederek yeniden şekillendirir. Bu kimliğin yeniden inşasını sağlayan ve tanımını genişleten bir harekettir.

Bu çalışmada Phillips'in *Crossing the River* (1993), *A Distant Shore* (2003) ve *In the Falling Snow* (2009) romanlarında Britanya'nın siyah Atlantik ile bağlantılarını öne çıkaran transkültürel belleğinin yüz yıllar boyunca coğrafi sınırları aşarak ulus, kimlik ve kültür gibi kavramların emperyal miras ve milliyetçi söylemler tarafından tek uluslu yapılaşmasını sorunsallaştırdığı savunulmaktadır. İncelenen romanlarda, yazar, geçmişin dönüştürücü etkisine dikkat çekerek Britanya'nın karışık tarihi ve siyah Atlantik'in transkültürel hafızasını ele almaktadır. Bu nedenle, bu çalışmanın teorik çerçevesi, transkültürel bellek ve Paul Gilroy'un siyah Atlantik kavramını temel alarak, Phillips'in romanlarında temsil edildiği şekliyle belleğin kimlik inşasındaki rolünü öne çıkarmaktadır. İncelenen romanlarda, Britanya'nın siyah Atlantik ile ortak geçmişinin oluşturduğu transkültürel bellek, herhangi bir kolektif tarih yazımına ve siyahiliğin tek bir kolektif kimlik olarak anlaşılmasına meydan okuyan çeşitli bireysel hikayeleri açığa çıkarır. Bu bağlamda, bu bireysel hikayelerin birbiriyle ve genel olarak siyahi diasporayı oluşturmada etkisine odaklanan bu tez, belleğin kimlik

inşasına ve bireylerin hatırlama ve unutma yoluyla sosyal değişim ve çatışmayla başa çıkma yollarına nasıl katkıda bulunduğunu araştırmaktadır. Phillips bu eserlerde tarihteki boşluklara ve tarihin yadsınan kısımlarına dikkat çekerek okuyucuyu bu konularda kendi varsayımlarını sorgulamaya teşvik eder. Bunu yaparken farklı zaman dilimlerini bir araya getiren parçalı bir anlatı kullanır. Bu anlatı sayesinde birbiriyle ilişkisi yokmuş gibi görünen farklı zaman dilimlerindeki olayların aslında nasıl birbirini takip ettiğini ve zaman içerisinde toplumların kimlik inşasına katkıda bulunduğunu gösterir. Bu çalışma aynı zamanda transkültürel belleğin zaman ve coğrafi sınırlar arasındaki hareketliliğinin romanların tematik ve biçimsel unsurlarına yansıtıldığını öne sürmektedir. Romanların biçimsel unsurları geçmişin farklı versiyonlarının tartışmalı bir anlatı oluşturacak şekilde sunmakta etkilidir. Bu nedenle tematik ve biçimsel özellikler teorik çerçeve kapsamında bir arada tartışılmıştır.

Phillips'in eserleri genellikle siyahi kimliğin temsilleri, ırk, yerinden edilme, yurt ve göç gibi meselelere odaklanan postkolonyal teori ve diaspora çalışmaları açısından incelenmiştir. Gilroy'un siyah Atlantik kavramı da yazarın eserlerini inceleyen pek çok çalışmanın parçası olmuştur. Önceki çalışmalarda bellek kavramı hep genel bir tema olarak işlenmiş, belleğin hareketliliği ve bunun bireysel ve ulusal kimliğin inşasına ya da yıkımına katkıda bulunan yönleri gölgede kalmıştır. Oysa ki bellek kölelik tarihinden günümüze diaspora kimliğini oluşturan, Britanya tarihinin Atlantik tarihinden ayrı düşünülemeyeceğini gösteren ve en önemlisi de sabit, homojen bir toplumsal yapıya dayanan ulus kimliğinin yıkımında belirleyici bir unsurdur. Bu çalışmada incelenen eserler daha önce bir araya getirilmemiş ve transkültürel bellek açısından ele alınmamıştır. Bu nedenle, bu çalışma Phillips'in romanlarının analizinde gözlemlenen bu eksikliği göz önünde bulundurarak, transkültürel bellek ile siyah Atlantik konsepti çerçevesinde romanlara yeni bir bakış açısı getirmeyi amaçlamaktadır.

Bu çalışmada Phillips'in özellikle bu eserlerinin bir araya getirilmesinin başlıca nedeni bu romanların birlikte okunduklarında hem bireysel hem de ulusal düzeyde kimlik oluşumunun karmaşık süreçlerini ve kimliğin yüzyıllar boyunca nasıl gelişip yeniden yapılandırılabildiğini gösteren transkültürel belleği ortaya çıkarmalarıdır. Phillips kurgusal karakterler oluştururken kutuplaştırıcı

sınıflandırmalardan kaçınır. Karakterleri yargılamak yerine onları birbirine bağlayan bireysel iletişim eylemlerini anlamaya yönlendirmeyi seçer. Bu amaçla, anlatımda otoriter bir anlatıcı rolü üstlenmez; belirli bir düşünceyi karakterler ya da anlatım yoluyla okuyucuya empoze etmez. Okuyucunun karakterlerin kimlik inşa süreçlerini anlamaları için sosyal, kültürel ve tarihsel süreçleri anlamalarına ve değerlendirmelerine imkân tanır. Romanlarında resmettiği alışılmadık figürler bu kimliklerin kalıplaşmış bir öze sahip olamayacağını göstermeye yardımcı olur. Ortak yerinden edilme deneyimlerini, yalnızlık ve ait olmama duygularını paylaşan karakterler, kimlik oluşumunda özcü yaklaşımlara karşıt bir yaklaşım geliştirmek için bireyselleştirilmişlerdir. Bu romanlar transatlantik köle ticaretiyle başlayan ve çağdaş Britanya'da devam eden bir hikâyenin bileşenleri olarak okunabilir. Bu nedenle bu çalışmanın analiz bölümlerinde romanlarda yansıtılan siyahi diaspora bilincinin oluşum ve zaman içindeki değişiminin bir haritası çıkarılmıştır. 1800'lerde yürütülen köle ticaretiyle başlayan anlatı ırkın kimlik oluşumunda birincil belirleyici olarak önemini kaybetmeye başladığı çağdaş ve çok kültürlü Britanya'ya kadar geniş bir tarihsel bağlama uzanır. Romanlarda bu süreçteki hareketliliğe paralel olarak farklı dönemlerden köleler ve köle tacirleri, İkinci Dünya Savaşı sırasındaki GI askerleri, mülteci ve göçmenler, diasporayı oluşturan üç ayrı kuşak ve sistemin kurbanı konumunda olan birçok karakter yer almaktadır. Karakterlerin bireysel hikayeleri ve birbirlerinden farklı kimlik oluşumları Phillips'in her türlü ırkçı, kültürel ve ulusal özcülüğe karşı duruşunun yansımasıdır. Bu hareketliliğin ortaya çıkardığı transkültürel bellek, ulus ve kültür kavramlarının kendiliğinden heterojen kategoriler olduğunu, hiçbir kimliğin sabit bir öze dayanmadığını, kültürel değişimin tüm toplumlar için kaçınılmaz olduğunu gösterir. Bu nedenle bu çalışmada incelenen romanlarda yazar, milliyetçi yaklaşımlarla, dar bir bakış açısıyla oluşturulan ve kabul gören ulusal kolektif kimlik anlayışına karşı çıkmakta ve buna zıt bir anlatı ortaya koymaktadır.

Bellek ve belleğin göç gibi toplumsal hareketliliklerle farklı kıtalara yayılması Phillips'in çoğulcu yurt anlayışıyla önemli ölçüde bağlantılıdır. Romanlarında geleneksel yurt ve kimlik kavramlarına karşı çıkan Phillips'e göre yurt karmaşık coğrafi ve tarihsel durumlara göre şekillenen bir kavramdır. Afrika diasporasının

kimliği de farklı toplumların zaman içinde sınırlar arasında hareketliliği ile oluşmuştur. Bunu göstermek için Phillips eserlerinde "karşıya geçme" temasına odaklanan karakterler ve durumlar kurgular. Bu eserlerde Atlantik boyunca Orta Geçit'ten bu yana gerçekleşen toplumsal hareketlilik, özellikle de savaş sonrası göç tarafından şekillendirilen çoklu aidiyetlerin ulusötesi ve çok katmanlı kimlik duygusunu şekillendiren ana unsurdur. Hareketliliğin oluşturduğu bu çok katmanlılık Phillips'in kendi kimliğinin de bir göstergesidir ve bir yazar olarak kendisini bu deneyimi yansıtmaktan sorumlu tutar.

Bu çalışmanın teorik çerçevesini oluşturan ikinci bölümünde bellek teorilerine ve konseptlerine yer verilmiş, bellek ile siyahi Atlantik arasındaki paralellik öne çıkarılmıştır. Özellikle son yirmi yılda bellek çalışmalarına olan ilginin artmasıyla, bellek Holokost, sömürgecilik, kölelik, dünya savaşları, göç, ve terör gibi konular kapsamında araştırılmış ve yirmi birinci yüzyıl "bellek çağı" olarak görülmeye başlamıştır. Gelişen çok kültürlülükle yeni kimliklerin ortaya çıkması geçmişi anımsamaya yönelik yeni bakış açılarının geliştirilmesine yardımcı olmuştur. Tarih ve belleğe artan bu ilgi bilgiye erişimi artıran yeni ulaşım ve iletişim teknolojileriyle de kolaylaşır. Bellek günümüzde kültürel ve ulusal sınırları aşan değişken bir kavram olarak kabul edilmektedir. Ancak bellek üzerine yapılan çalışmaların ilk evrelerinde ulus ve ulusal kimlik ön plandadır ve 1990'ların ulus kavramı önceliğini korumuştur. Bu çalışmalar ulus ya da herhangi bir istikrarlı, özcü kolektif çerçevenin, kimlik inşası ve geçmişi hatırlama yollarında belirleyici bir rol oynadığı varsayımına dayanır. Bu tür yaklaşımlar kolektif geçmişi etnosantrik bir bakış açısıyla inceler; bu nedenle, 1990ların sonlarına kadar yapılan bu çalışmalarda kültürel ve ulusal çerçevelerin değişkenliği göz ardı edilmektedir.

Fransız sosyolog Maurice Halbwachs belleği kolektif bir fenomen ve sosyal kimliğin bir parçası olarak inceleyerek yirminci yüzyılın başlarında modern bellek çalışmalarının temelini atmıştır. Çalışmalarında ulus kavramına değinmese de belleği bir gruba ait olma bilinciyle ilişkilendiren ve aslında belleği toplumsal bir kavram olarak ilk kez ele alan Halbwachs, 1925'te öne sürdüğü "toplumsal çerçeveler" kavramı ile, belleğin geçmişe ait dönemlerin kolektif olarak "toplumsal çerçeveler" etrafında yeniden üretimi olduğunu iddia eder. Halbwachs'a göre bireyler geçmişi

çevresel etmenlere göre hatırlarlar. Geçmişte yaşanan olayları bellekte tanıma ve yerleştirme de toplumsal olarak gerçekleşir. Bireysel olarak hatırladıklarımızı bu kolektif ve toplumsal çerçeveler içerisine yerleştiririz ve düşüncelerimizi bu çerçevelere oturttuğumuz oranda hatırlama eylemini gerçekleştirebiliriz. Bu nedenle bireysel ve toplumsal bellek birbiriyle bağlantılıdır. Bireysel bellek toplumsal çerçevelerin filtresinden geçerek şekillenir. Bu toplumsal çerçeveler aile, toplumsal sınıf, din, kuşak, gelenek ve kültürel uygulamaları kapsar ve belleğe derinlik ve tutarlılık kazandırır. Toplumsal çerçeveler bireyler arasında zaman içerisinde bir birlik bilinci oluşturur ve kolektif bellek bu bilinç aracılığıyla meydana gelir. Başka bir deyişle, toplumlar geçmişi kolektif olarak yeniden inşa ederler.

Belleğin "inşa edilir" olması toplumların geçmişin hangi yönlerinin hatırlanmaya değer olduğunu belirleyebiliyor olmalarından kaynaklanır. Belleğin seçici doğası, toplumsal çerçeveleri oluşturan topluluk belirli bir zamana ve coğrafyaya bağlı olduğu için, onu çarpıtılmaya açık hale getirir. Tarihteki belirli bir olay farklı dönemlerde yaşayan topluluklarda farklı çağrışımlar uyandırabilir, çünkü bellek, topluluklarda geçmişin kolektif inşasını kontrol eden kurumların siyasi amaçları doğrultusunda belirli ideolojilere göre yeniden yapılandırılır. Sadece toplumsal fayda sağlayacak, ya da bu ideolojilere hizmet edecek tarihsel olaylar kolektif bellekte tutulur. Bu süreç ulus-devletlerin inşasında da benzer şekilde işler. Geçmiş, bir ulusun kolektif belleğinde ulusal değerler ve toplumsal güç dinamikleri tarafından günümüzde yeniden inşa edilir. Ulusu oluşturan topluluklardan baskın olan grup kendi çıkarları doğrultusunda geçmişin belirli bir bölümünü tüm ulusu temsil edecek şekilde kolektif belleğe entegre eder. Çeşitli anma yöntemleri ile geçmişin bu versiyonu zamanla herkes tarafından hatırlanan ve benimsenen ortak bir miras haline gelir.

Halbwachs'ın çalışmaları ilerleyen yıllardaki bellek araştırmaları üzerinde etkili olmuştur. Halbwachs'ın kolektif bellek anlayışından yola çıkan Fransız tarihçi Pierre Nora, 1980'lerde yaptığı çalışmalarda Fransa'nın ulusal belleğine odaklanmıştır. Nora belleği kolektif bir öze, değerlere veya kültüre dayanan, ulusal kurumlar tarafından tanımlanan tek bir topluluk veya ulusla sınırlı bir olgu olarak görür. Nora ulusal kimliğin ve belleğin "bellek mekanları" adını verdiği yerlerde muhafaza edildiğini öne sürer. Bu

mekanlar anıt, müze gibi yerler olabildiği gibi anma törenleri, tarihte bilinen belli başlı kişiliklere de işaret edebilir. Nora'ya göre, tarih olaylara göre belirlenirken, bellek bu mekanlara bağlıdır. Bellek mekanları toplumsal mirası simgeler ve aslında yapay oluşumlardır çünkü geçmişin günümüzdeki temsili durumundalardır. Modern dönem öncesi toplumlarda bellek toplumun günlük yaşamının bir parçası olan sözlü gelenekler, ritüeller ve kültürel uygulamalar aracılığıyla korunmuştur. Ancak modern toplumlarda küreselleşme, teknolojinin gelişmesi ve kentleşmenin de etkisiyle geleneklerden uzaklaşılmış ve geçmiş tarihin analitik bakış açısıyla incelenen bir kavram haline gelmiştir. Modern toplumlar geçmişle olan bağlarını koruyamadığı için geçmişle günümüz arasında bir süreklilik duygusu oluşturma ihtiyacı doğmuştur. Bu sebeple geçmiş yapay olarak bellek mekanlarında yeniden inşa edilmiştir. Ulusal kimlik, ulusal toprak sınırları içerisinde bu mekanların temsil ettiği ortak bir geçmişe dayanarak şekillendirilir. Bellek mekanlarının ulusal temsilleri sayesinde birey de kendisini ulusun bir parçası olarak görür. Halbwachs ve Nora'nın çalışmaları belleğin ulusal kimliğin inşasındaki rolünü vurgulayarak farklı topluluklar arasındaki kültürel alışverişi ve belleğin ulusal sınırlar ötesindeki hareketliliğini görmezden gelmiştir. Bu nedenle, özellikle büyük ölçekli göçler sonrası ulus ve kültür gibi kavramların sınırlarının değişmez olduğu düşüncesi geçerliliğini yitirdikçe ulusal çerçevenin bellek araştırmalarındaki önceliği de geride kalmıştır.

Günümüzde bellek, belirli bir grup, yer ya da olayla sınırlandırılmayan, değişken bir süreç olarak kavramsallaştırılır. Özellikle 1990'ların başında kültür, bellek çalışmalarının odak noktası haline gelmiştir. Kültürel bellek terimi Jan ve Aleida Assmann tarafından bu yıllarda ortaya konmuş ve sonraki yıllarda geliştirilmiştir. Kültür büyük ölçüde önceki nesillerin belirli normların ve değerlerin sonraki nesillere aktarılmasıyla oluştuğundan, bellek, toplulukların kültürel kimliğinin inşasında merkezi bir rol oynar. Astrid Erll ve Ann Rigney belleğin ancak bir toplulukta kültürel aktarım süreci ile anıların zaman içerisinde ve coğrafi sınırlar ötesinde bir birlik duygusu oluşturarak paylaşılması yoluyla kolektif hale geldiğini öne sürerler. Bellek, ulusal varsayımların ötesinde bir dizi olay tarafından şekillendirilir ve kültürlerarası alışveriş aracılığıyla geçmişin etkilerini günümüze taşır. Önceki bellek çalışmalarının üzerinde durduğu bölgesel sınırların aksine, kültürel bellek kavramının kimliği yapılandıran dinamik bir güç olduğu düşünülmektedir. Jan ve Aleida Assmann kolektif belleği "iletişimsel" ve "kültürel" bellek olarak ikiye

ayırırlar. Kültürel bellek topluluk üyelerine ortak bir geçmişten gelen birlik hissi verirken, iletişimsel bellek, günlük iletişime, sözlü geleneğe dayanan kolektif bellek çeşitlerini ifade eder ve günlük hayatın gereklerine göre şekillenir. Dolayısıyla kültürel bellek ve iletişimsel bellek birbirini tamamlayan kavramlardır. Kültürel belleğin zaman içinde değişebileceğini vurgulayan Assmannlar bellek ve tarihin de birbirinden ayrı düşünülemeyeceğini savunurlar. Aleida Assmann bellek ve tarihi tamamlayıcı hatırlama türleri olarak düşünerek "işlevsel bellek" ile "arşiv belleği" arasında bir ayrım yapar. Buna göre, arşiv belleği tüm bilgileri saklarken, materyali seçen ve yorumlayan işlevsel bellek için de bir temel sağlar. Arşiv belleği geçmişe bağlıdır, işlevsel bellek ise geleceğe bakar. Bu nedenle, ikisi de kimlik inşasında önemli bir role sahiptirler. A. Assmann'a göre özellikle arşiv belleği sayesinde tarih boyunca göz ardı edilmiş ve dışlanmış toplulukların deneyimleri geçmişten bugüne aktarılır ve işlevsel bellekte temsil edilir. Bu topluluklar için bellek, özellikle yabancılaşma ve kültürel miraslarını yitirme tehdidine karşı kimlik inşasında önemli bir yere sahiptir.

Kültürel bellek konseptleri her ne kadar belleğin sosyal süreçlerle değişebilir nitelikte olduğunu vurgulasa da kültürel çeşitliliğe ve toplumsal sınırlar dışında yaşanan kültürel alışverişe değinmez. Tek kültürlü bellek anlayışı özellikle II. Dünya Savaşı'ndan sonra ulus-devletlerin küresel arenada güç ve önemini kaybetmeye başlamasıyla geçerliliğini yitirmiştir. Özellikle dekolonizasyon dalgasıyla birlikte, postkolonyal söylemler de toplumlar arasında daha etkileşimli bir kültürel ilişki paradigması lehine transkültürel bellek teorilerini oluşturmada etkili olmuştur. Kültürün akışkanlığına ilişkin bu yaklaşım, çağdaş bellek çalışmalarının ana paradigmasını oluşturur. Bu nedenle son yıllarda bellek çalışmaları transkültürel bir perspektife doğru genişlemiştir. Diğer bir deyişle, günümüzün kültürel kaygılarını tanımlamak için belleğin dinamik doğasına ve belleğin hareketliliğine odaklanan yeni yaklaşımlar geliştirilmiştir. Bu çalışmanın teorik çerçevesini oluşturan bu yaklaşımlar önceki bellek çalışmalarının ulus merkezli bakış açısını sorunsallaştırır ve belleğin belirli ulus ve kültür sınırlarının dışındaki hareketine odaklanarak transkültürel bellek kavramı üzerinde yoğunlaşır. 1990'larda Alman filozof Wolfgang Welsch tarafından geliştirilen "transkültürellik" kavramı kültürlerin yeni unsurlarla harmanlanarak karakterize edildiğini ifade eder. Her kültür kendi içinde başka kültürlerin bir kesişimidir. On sekizinci yüzyılda ırksal ve kültürel saflığı ifade eden tek kültürlülüğe karşı, transkültürellik dünya kültürlerinin birbirine bağlılığını öne çıkarır.

Çağdaş kültürlerde göçler, gelişmiş iletişim sistemleri ve milletlerarası ekonomik dayanışma kültürler arası alışverişi daha da görünür kılmıştır.

Welsch'in fikirlerinden yola çıkan Lucy Bond ve Jessica Rapson'a göre transkültürel bellek anıların sınırlayıcı ve ayrıştırıcı etnik, dini, siyasi kategorilerin ötesine geçerek yayılması ile oluşur. Tek bir kültürün sınırları içine gömülü bellek anlayışı, belirli bir coğrafi alanın dışındaki kültürel dinamikleri görmezden gelerek ırkçılık, milliyetçilik gibi ayrıştırıcı kavramları besler. Bu nedenle tek kültürlülüğe bağlı bellek anlayışını reddeden transkültürel bellek araştırmacıları çalışmalarında transkültürelliği globalleşme, ulusaşırı etkileşim, çok yönlü ve kuşaklar arası bellek aktarımı gibi konular çerçevesinde ele alırlar. Belleğin özellikle göç, savaş, ticaret ve medya gibi kültürü sınırlar ötesine taşıyan etkenler aracılığıyla hareketini inceleyen Astrid Erll, "seyahat eden bellek" kavramını öne sürdüğü çalışmasında transkültürel terimini farklı akademik bağlamlarda ulusötesi, diasporik, melez, sömürge sonrası, kreolize, küresel veya kozmopolit gibi kavramlarla tanımlanabilecek genel bir terim olarak kullanır. Kültürel belleğin hem bireysel hem toplumsal alanda varlığını sürdürmesi için sürekli hareket halinde olması gerekir. Başka bir deyişle, hareket halindeki bellek, ulusal belleğin ötesinde bilgi, anlatı ve ritüeller oluşturur.

Transkültürel bellek teorilerinin kültürel belleğin sınırlar ötesindeki hareketliliğini temel alması, Paul Gilroy'un siyah Atlantik kavramında açıkladığı, diasporanın "kökler ve rotalar" arasındaki hareketini çağrıştırır. Bu nedenle, bu çalışmada siyah Atlantik deneyimi, belleğin sosyal ve bölgesel sınırların ötesine göç yoluyla yayılmasının bir örneği olarak ele alınmıştır. Siyah Atlantik köle ticareti rotalarını oluşturan İngiltere, Afrika, Amerika ve Karayipler kültürünün bir birleşimi olan ve etnik köken ve milliyet sınırlarını aşan bir kültürü tanımlar. Gilroy, kölelik ile modernitenin tarihsel gelişimi arasındaki ilişkiyi betimlemek için ırk ve ulusun kültürel politikalarını araştırdığı çalışmasında kültürün ırksallaştırılmasına ve belli etnik kökenlere göre sınıflandırılmasına karşı çıkar. Aşılması güç görünen ulusal ve kültürel sınırların değişkenliğini gösteren Gilroy kölelik tarihinin batı modernitesinin meşru bir parçası olarak kabul edilmesi gerektiğini iddia eder. Modernite aslında karmaşık tarihsel ilişkiler ve kölelerin sömürüsü üzerine inşa edilmiştir; bu nedenle, modernliğin dışında kalan "modernite öncesi" tabir edilen özellikler batı medeniyetlerinin de bir parçasıdır. Gilroy'a göre ulusal ve kültürel kimlikler sabit ya da değişmez değildir, birbirlerinden kesin sınırlarla ayrılamazlar. Siyah

Atlantik'i oluşturan toplumların kültürü halkların tarih boyunca hareketiyle yeniden oluşturulmuştur. Ulusötesi deneyimin getirdiği kültürel çeşitlilik, kültürel kimliği tanımlayan tüm özcü ve milliyetçi kategorilere aykırıdır. Bu çeşitlilik diasporanın ayrılmaz bir parçasıdır. Gilroy milliyetçi söylemler tarafından ırk ve ulus arasında kurulan bağı reddederek kimlik inşasında diaspora toplumlarının aştığı sınırların ve takip ettikleri yeni rotaların etken olduğunu iddia eder. Kültürel kategorilerin iddia edilen homojenliğinin aksine, siyah Atlantik kavramında siyahilik tarihsel koşullar ve çeşitli kültürel etkiler tarafından oluşturulduğu için sosyal olarak inşa edilmiş bir kültürel kimliktir. Gilroy siyahi kültürel kimliğin çeşitliliğini ve Orta Geçit ile olan ilişkisini açıklamak için de gemi imgesi kullanır. Hareket halindeki yaşayan bir mikro-kültürel sistem olan gemi transkültürel bir bellek alanı oluşturur. Bu bellek, ulusal çerçeveleri aşarak, kültürler arası melezleşme ve yeni kimliklerin oluşmasıyla bir karşı kültür yaratır.

Tıpkı diaspora gibi transkültürel belleği oluşturan ana etken sınırlar ötesi hareketliliktir. Ulusötesi ve transkültürel bir çeşitlilik üzerine kurulan diasporada bellek, benzer deneyimleri paylaşan farklı topluluklar tarafından yeniden oluşturulur. Ayrıca, hatırlama eylemi resmi tarihi kayıtların ve kolonyal metinlerin dahil etmediği veya marjinalleştirdiği topluluklar için adaleti yeniden tesis etmenin bir aracıdır. Bu tür topluluklar bellek yoluyla yeni kimlikler oluştururlar, ancak bu her zaman gönüllü olmak zorunda değildir. Örneğin zorunlu göç hem yeni kimliklerin inşasını hem de yerinden edilme anlatılarını şekillendirir. Dolayısıyla göç, İngiltere örneğinde olduğu gibi, göç edilen ülkenin varsayılan ulusal kimliğiyle arasında bir kimlik müzakeresi başlatır. Ulusun mevcut kimliği, kolektif kimliğin toplumsal çerçeveleri genişledikçe göçmen topluluklar tarafından dönüştürülür. Göçmen nüfus, siyasi, sosyal ve kültürel oluşumlar içinde kırılmalar ve yeni alanlar yaratarak kolektif belleği yeniden inşa eder. Bu anlamda bellek, geçmiş mirasların gözden geçirilmesini talep eden bir müzakere alanıdır. Geçmişteki olaylara alternatif bakış açıları ve açıklamalar getirerek resmi tarih yazımını ve geleneksel anlatıları alt üst eder ve kesintiye uğratır. Bu nedenle bellek, geçmişi hatırlama yollarını kontrol eden baskıcı güçlere meydan okur.

Erll, edebiyatı bir kültürel bellek aracı olarak görür. Özellikle ulus, kimlik ve tarih kavramlarına yeni bir bakış açısı kazandırmak için belirli tarihsel dönemleri ve kolonyal metinlerin dışında kalmış tarihi olay ve kişileri eserlerinde konu edinen siyahi İngiliz yazarlar ulusal kimlik ve kolektif kültür inşasına dahil olan süreçlere dikkat çekerler. Bu

tür edebiyat eserlerinde göçmen ve diasporik toplulukların yer değiştirme süreci yansıtılarak resmi tarih yazınında görmezden gelinenler bellek yoluyla açığa çıkartılır. Böylece toplumda azınlık konumunda olanlar edebiyat yoluyla kendi hikâyelerini duyurma fırsatı bulurlar. Siyah İngiliz edebiyatı, siyahi diasporanın deneyimini aktaran bir bellek aktarım aracı olarak düşünülebilir. Hatırlama eyleminin sağladığı güçle, hikayeleri tarihte tanınmayan halklar, kültürel belleklerini koruma, gelecek nesillere aktarma ve tarihin diğer yüzünü ortaya çıkarma şansına sahip olurlar.

Phillips bu kültürel belleği ve Britanya ile siyah Atlantik ilişkilerinin oluşturduğu transkültürelliği öne çıkardığı romanlarında özel bir parçalı anlatı biçimi kullanır. Geçmişle günümüzü art arda paragraflarda farklı anlatıcılar aracılığıyla ve zamansal ve mekânsal değişimlerle okuyucuya aktarır. Bu sayede okuyucu birbiriyle alakasız görünen tarihi olayların aslında nasıl bağlantılı olduğunu fark eder. Bu parçalı anlatı biçimi ayrıca romanlardaki karakterlerin sömürgeci ve emperyal miras sonucu parçalanmış hayatlarının da bir yansımasıdır. Phillips siyahi diaspora deneyimini farklı zaman dilimlerinde resmederek, emperyal mirasın hala toplumu etkilediğini, ırkçılık gibi ayrımcı söylemleri beslediğini gösterirken bir yandan da kimliğin değişkenliğini ve ırk ve etnik kökenin kültürel kimlikle özdeşleştirilemeyeceğini örnekler.

Bu emperyal miras aslında millileştirilmiş bir kolektif hafıza üzerine kuruludur ve milliyetçi söylemin temelini oluşturur. Milliyetçi söylem etnik köken, ırk ve kültürel kimliği homojen olan bir toplum hayaline dayanır. Ulusal kimliğin bir parçası olarak hatırlanmak üzere tarihin sadece şanlı anları seçilir ve toplumun güçlü çoğunluğuna hizmet edecek şekilde kolektif bir bellek oluşturulur. Bu nedenle, kolektif bellekte ve tarih yazınında Britanya'nın köle ticaretindeki rolü ve siyahi diasporanın geçmişi göz ardı edilir. Ancak siyahi toplulukların kitlesel olarak Britanya'ya göç etmesine yol açan şey, transatlantik köle ticareti ve sömürgecilik sürecinin yıkıcı etkileridir. Britanya'nın savaş sonrası dönemde oluşan işçi açığını kapatmak için eski sömürgelerinden iş gücü talep etmesiyle birlikte özellikle Windrush nesli olarak bilinen göçmenler kitlesel bir göç hareketiyle Britanya'ya yerleşerek İngiliz toplumunu derinden etkilemiş, tarihsel bağları yadsıyan söylemleri sarsmıştır. Siyahilere yönelik büyük bir ön yargıyla karşılaşan göçmenler davetsiz misafir olarak görülmüş ve ulusal kimlikten dışlanmışlardır. İngilizlik mitine ve dışlayıcı söylemlerine karşı çıkan Phillips eserlerinde tarihsel farkındalığın önemini vurgular. Bu çalışmada incelenen romanlarda İngiliz toplumunun ve ulusal

kimliğin içkin heterojenliğini, İngiliz ve Afrika tarihini ve çağdaş İngiliz toplumu üzerindeki etkilerini resmeder. Geçmişin güncel sorunlarla ilişkisini ortaya çıkarmak için siyah diasporanın varlığını tarihselleştirir ve kültürel kimliğin çoklu kaynaklardan beslendiğini gösterir.

Bu teorik ve tarihi bağlam çerçevesinde üçüncü bölümde Phillips'in *Crossing the River* romanı incelenmektedir. Orta Geçit tarihinin ve Britanya'daki sosyal ilişkilerde sömürge ideolojisinin temellerinin tanıtıldığı roman, Afrika diasporasının Atlantik boyunca hareketini resmetmesi açısından bu çalışmada tartışılan diğer iki romanın analizi için bir zemin hazırlar. Afrikalı bir babanın çocukları Nash, Martha ve Travis'i köle tüccarı kaptan Hamilton'a satmasının ardından üç kardeşin siyah Atlantik'in üçgen rotasını oluşturan ABD, Afrika ve İngiltere'de geçen parçalanmış hikayelerine odaklanan roman siyah diaspora tarihinin beyazlardan ayrı düşünülemeyeceğini vurgulamak için köle tüccarlarını da ayrıntılı betimler. Köle kardeşlerin anıları köle tüccarınkilerle iç içe sunularak siyah Atlantik'e çoğulcu bir bakış açısı getirilir. Romandaki her bölüm başka bir zaman diliminde ve kıtada geçmektedir; böylece belleğin yüzyıllar ve kıtalar arasındaki hareketi öne çıkarılmıştır.

Belleğin sınırlar arasında hareketi farklı deneyimleri bir araya getiren ve siyah Atlantik toprakları arasındaki temel bağlantıyı gösteren bellek ağları oluşturmaktadır. Bu ağlar üzerindeki zamansal ve mekânsal kırılmalar, diaspora deneyiminin tek bir anlatıya sığdırılamayan kültürlerarası niteliğini ortaya koymaktadır. Romanda diaspora kimliğinin özcü kimlik anlayışlarına nasıl meydan okuduğunu gösteren parçalı bir yapı kullanılır. Her bir parçada sömürge tarihinin kayıtlarında yer almayan tarihi figürleri temsil eden bir karakterin hikâyesi yer alır. Bu farklı temsiller diaspora kimliğinin Afrikalı köklere dayanan bir öze değil, yeni deneyimleri gösteren farklı rotalar arasındaki hareket sonucu şekillendiğini ifade eder. Her deneyim tarihsel ve kültürel etkiler ışığında şekillenir. Bu da bize kimliğin temel bir ulusal, etnik ya da kültürel öze dayanmadığını gösterir.

Romanın 1800lerde geçen ilk bölümünde Amerikan Kolonizasyon Derneği tarafından Liberya'ya gönderilen bir misyoner ve aynı zamanda eskiden bir köle olan Nash Williams ve onun efendisi Edward Williams'ın hikayesine yer verilir. Nash'in transkültürel yolculuğu hem onun kimlik inşasında büyük bir rol oynamaktadır hem de Edward karakterinin ikiyüzlülüğünü gözler önüne sererek Amerika'nın kolonileşme ve köle ticaretindeki rolünü vurgulamaktadır. Liberya'daki ilk günlerinde Nash'in batıda

aldığı eğitim ve kültürel altyapı onu sömürgeci söylemleri taklit etmeye iter. Afrika'lı toplumların ilkel ve cahil olduklarını düşünerek kendisinin de batı kültürü sayesinde Afrika'ya medeniyet getirdiğine inanır. Fakat zamanla, özellikle de Edward'a yazdığı mektuplara cevap alamaması sonucunda görevini ve eğitimini sorgulamaya ve yerel hayata ayak uydurmaya başlar. Bu iki kültürlülük kimlik inşasında önemli bir rol oynayarak Nash'in Liberya kültürünü de benimsemesini sağlar.

Diğer yandan Edward'ın eşinin onu kıskanarak Nash'in mektuplarını gizlice yırtıp atması Edward ile Nash arasında olası bir ilişkiyi ima eder. Phillips efendi-köle ilişkisine böyle bir bakış açısı getirerek sömürgecilik sürecinin sebep olduğu sömürüye yeni bir boyut katar. Edward'ın Nash'e yazdığı mektuplarda kullandığı dil onu hep küçük gördüğünü, kendi çıkarları doğrultusunda kullandığını gösterir. İkisinin birbirlerine yazdığı mektuplar ile iki farklı bakış açısını kıyaslama imkânı sunan roman, sömürgeci zihniyete bir eleştiri getirir. Misyoner girişimlerin sözde yardımseverliğinin arkasına saklanan Edward, batının kolonileşme sürecindeki ikiyüzlü politikalarının bir temsilcisidir.

Esaretten kurtularak batıya yolculuk eden diğer Afroamerikalılara katılan fakat yorgun düştüğü için onlardan ayrılan Martha travmatik geçmişini hatırlayarak siyahi diaspora kimliğinin başka bir yönünü vurgular. Roman Martha ve ailesinin bir müzayedede köle olarak satılması sonucu parçalanan hayatlarını yine parçalı bir anlatıyla okuyucuya aktarır. Nehrin karşısına geçerken köle kimliğinden kurtulan Martha yine de geçmişten kopamaz; rüyalarında ve hayallerinde sürekli kızı Eliza Mae'yi görmektedir. Diaspora deneyiminin travmatik yönünü vurgulayan bu bölümde Martha'nın hayal ile gerçek arasındaki sınırı bulanıklaştıran anlatısı geçmişin kimliği nasıl şekillendirdiğinin de bir örneğidir.

Romanın üçüncü bölümü Afrikalı kardeşlerin hikayesini yarıda keserek köle taciri kaptan Hamilton'un Afrika yolculuğunu kaydettiği seyir defterine ve eşine yazdığı iki mektuba odaklanır. Orta Geçit tarihini sadece siyahilerin tarihi gibi ele alan İngiliz milliyetçi söylemine karşı Phillips hem beyazların rolü ve sorumluluğunu hem de bu deneyimin psikolojik, sosyal ve kültürel boyutlarını vurgulamak için Hamilton'un anlatısıyla Afrikalı kardeşlerinkini yan yana getirmiştir. Seyir defterinde köleler eşya gibi numaralandırılıp, ölen ya da hastalananlara zayiat gözüyle bakılırken, siyahi karakterlerin anlatımı bu deneyimin psikolojik boyutlarını gözler önüne serer. Hamilton'un defteri

aslında köle taciri John Newton'ın kitabına dayanmaktadır. Phillips bu kitaptan alıntılarla ve kendi eklemeleriyle tarihi anlatı metinlerinin aslında değiştirilebilir ve güvenilmez olduğunu vurgular. Siyah Atlantik belleğine köle tacirinin anılarının da eklenmesiyle hem farklı bakış açıları bir araya getirilmiş hem de romanın başında vurgulanan ortak mirasa sömürgecilerin de dahil olduğu fikri öne sürülmüştür.

Diğer Afrikalı çocuğun sembolik hikayesi İkinci Dünya Savaşı döneminde İngiltere'de geçer. Amerika'dan gönderilen bir askeri birliğe dahil olan Travis'in siyahi bir asker olarak marjinalleşme öyküsü Joyce isminde İngiliz bir kadın tarafından anlatılır. Hamilton'un defterindeki duygusuz ve mekanik tavrına karşın Joyce'un olayları anlattığı günlüğü duygulara odaklanır. Başka bir kasabadan olan Joyce beyaz ve İngiliz vatandaşlığında olmasına rağmen kasaba halkı tarafından sürekli dışlanır. Joyce ve Travis'in ilişkisi toplum tarafından kabul görmez ve Joyce oğulları Greer'i evlatlık vermek zorunda kalır. Doğrusal olmayan bir anlatım biçiminde yansıtılan olaylar kolonyal mirasın siyahi insanları olduğu kadar beyazları da etkilediğini gösterir. Avrupa ve Amerika için savaşan Travis hem bu uğurda yaşamını yitirir hem de ırkçılığa izin veren yasalar yüzünden beyaz bir kadınla aile kurmasına izin verilmez. Joyce ise zaten psikolojik travmalarını atlamamışken bir de çocuğundan ayrılmanın acısını yaşar. Bu nedenle Afrikalı baba romanın sonunda Joyce'u da kendi çocuklarından biri olarak anar. Roman bu yönüyle birçok eleştirmenden olumsuz dönüş alsa da Joyce'un Afrikalı aileye dahil edilmesi aslında insanlar arasındaki bağın ortak bir etnik kökene değil benzer deneyimlerden geçip ortak acıları paylaşmanın yarattığı yakınlığa dayandığını vurgular.

Anlatım biçimindeki parçalanma yalnızca doğrusal anlatıların geleneksel yapısını altüst etmekle kalmaz, aynı zamanda Afrika diasporasının Atlantik boyunca hareketini de yansıtır. Anlatı çizgisinin çapraz geçişi, kimliklerin hep bir değişim ve gelişim sürecinde olmasını ve tarihi kayıtlarda yer verilmeyen figürlerin hikayesini yansıtır. Örneğin, Hıristiyan doktrinlerinde eğitim görmüş eski bir köle olarak Nash, Afrika'yı ilk başta sömürgecilerin bakış açısından değerlendirir. Edward bir köle efendisi olarak Nash'e olan ilgisi nedeniyle alışılmadık bir figürdür. Joyce, tarihi kayıtlarda bulunabilecek geleneksel beyaz bir kadın değildir. Farklı karakterlerle sağlanan bu çoğulluk kültürel sınırların yapaylığını ortaya çıkarır.

Romanın sonu, diasporanın bir özden ya da idealize edilmiş bir kökenden gelmediğini gösterir. Tıpkı Gilroy'un diaspora tanımında olduğu gibi, siyah diaspora

üyeleri arasındaki bağlantı ailevi kökenlere veya siyahi ırka özgü bir öze bağlı değildir. Bu tip ayrıştırıcı düşüncelere karşı çıkan romanda kimlik karakterlerin nehri geçerken izledikleri rotalar ile şekillenmiştir. Afrikalı babanın sonsözünde diasporanın yüz yıllar içindeki hayatta kalma mücadelesini kutladığını, transkültürel bağları, müzik, edebiyat, dans gibi üretim şekilleriyle Afrika kültürünün batı kültürüyle kaynaştığını görürüz. Bu sayede roman, baskın milliyetçi anlatılara karşı alternatif bir evren yaratmaktan çok tarihteki boşlukları doldurarak ve böylece ulusal tarihin resmi anlatılarında karşılaşmadığımız kenarda kalmış karakterlerin sesini duyurarak resmi tarih anlatılarını gözden geçirir. Bellek, tarihin bütünleştirici açıklamalarına karşı yıkıcı bir güç olarak ortaya çıkar. Phillips siyahi öznelliğe dair varsayılan rolleri ve ilişkileri sorgulayarak, kimliğin bir özünün olmadığını gösterir. Daha da önemlisi, transkültürel bellek aracılığıyla ön plana çıkan diaspora kökleri ve rotaları aracılığıyla kölelik tarihindeki boşlukları tamamlar.

Tezin dördüncü bölümünde *A Distant Shore* romanında emperyal mirasın hem günümüz İngiltere'sinin özellikle kırsal bölgelerinde hem de Afrika'da hala geçerli olması mülteci bir karakter üzerinden tartışılmaktadır. Emperyal miras ve transkültürel bellek geçmişle günümüzü yan yana anlatan parçalı biçim ve değişen anlatıcı sesleri ile okuyucuya sunulur. Solomon kuzey İngiltere'de ırkçı gençler tarafından öldürülür. Kasaba halkı suçluları korurken ulusal birliğe ve homojen toplum inancına dayanan ırkçı bir tavır sergiler. Diğer yandan, asıl ismi Gabriel olan Solomon Afrika'dan İngiltere'ye çok zor koşullarda kaçabilmiştir. Bu iki hikâyenin art arda verilmesi okuyucunun aradaki ilişkiyi çözerek tarihi bir bilinç kazanmasını sağlar.

Solomon'un sınırlar ötesi hareketi aynı zamanda Orta Geçit'i anımsattığı için kolonyal ve Britanya ile Afrika arasındaki transkültürel belleği beraberinde getirir. Afrika'daki yıkımı ve ülkesini terk etmek zorunda kalan insanların hikayesini Britanya tarihinin de bir parçası olarak gösteren yazar böylece resmi tarih kayıtlarına karşı belleği öne sürerek tarihi ve kültürel süreçlerin bireysel ve ulusal kimlik üzerindeki etkilerine değinir. Solomon'un İngiltere'ye gelmesi okuyucuya Britanya'nın sömürgeci uygulamalara müdahil olduğunu hatırlatarak imparatorluk tarihi ile toplumdaki çağdaş şiddet ve hoşgörüsüzlük arasındaki bağlantıya atıfta bulunur.

Homojen ulus yapısı ve tek kültürlülüğü temsil eden Weston halkı, şehrin kolektif belleğinde oluşan, istikrarlı, ortak bir geçmiş hayaline dayalı bir söylemle bu temsile

uymayan bireyleri dışlar. Bu nedenle aslında ulusal birlik zaten söz konusu değildir. Bu durum özellikle beyaz ve İngiliz olmasına rağmen dışlanan Dorothy'nin hikayesi ile ortaya çıkar. Solomon siyah olduğu için toplumdan uzaklaşırken, Dorothy orta yaşlı, boşanmış, ruh sağlığı sorunları olan bir kadın olduğu için dışlanır. Farklı geçmişlerine rağmen, ortak dışlanma ve yalnızlık duyguları onları bir araya getirir. Dorothy ailesini kaybetmiş, eşinden boşanmış ve hep yıkıcı ilişkiler yaşamış orta yaşlı bir müzik öğretmenidir. Solomon ile birbirlerinin yalnızlığını ve ait olmama deneyimini gözlemleyerek bir arkadaşlık kurarlar ve kasaba halkının dedikodularına maruz kalırlar. Solomon'un ölümünden sonra kasaba halkına karşı onunla arkadaşlığını açıkça savunan ve onlara meydan okuyan Dorothy ulus içerisindeki parçalanmışlığı da temsil eder. Hem Solomon ile yakınlığı hem de İngiltere'nin globalleşme, göç gibi etmenlerle zaman içindeki değişikliğini kabullenmesi onu kasaba halkından ayırır. Weston farklı gördükleri bireyleri marjinalleştirerek ve İngiliz kültürü içindeki etkilerini inkâr ederek kültürlerarası bağları ve belleği görmezden gelir. Bu anlayışa direnen roman, geçmişle günümüzü iç içe geçirerek kültürlerarası belleği ön plana çıkarır. Gilroy'un postkolonyal melankoli ve kamp mentalitesi kavramlarında açıkladığı gibi emperyal geçmişe özlem ve yabancılara karşı düşmanlık gösteren Weston halkı arasında evsizler, çingeneler ve Yahudiler de bulunmaktadır; yani ulus hiçbir zaman homojen olmamıştır.

Transkültürel bağlantılar global ve yerel etkilerin bir araya geldiği ortamlarda da kendini gösterir. Kültürel alışveriş ve ortak deneyimler sayesinde kimlik inşasının dinamik bir süreç olduğu vurgulanır. Karakterlerin geçirdiği kimlik müzakeresi bunun bir örneğidir. Ülkesinde savaş suçlusu olan Solomon İngiltere'de Weston halkından daha nazik ve hoşgörülü biridir. Irkçı ailesi tarafından ayrıştırıcı düşüncelerle büyütülen Dorothy babasının düşüncelerine karşı çıkmaya başlayıp Solomon ile arkadaşlığını ailesine karşı savunduğunu hayal eder. İskoç asıllı Anderson çifti İrlandalı Mike'ı evlat edinmişlerdir ve Solomon'u da bir süre evlerinde misafir ederler. Benzer şekilde sosyal hizmetli Katherine, Solomon'a yeni bir hayat kurması için yol gösterir. Bazı düşüncelerinde önyargılı olsalar da bu karakterler empati kurarak ve Solomon'a destek olarak toplumun genel ırkçı ve ayrımcı tutumunun dışında kalırlar.

Phillips diğerlerinde olduğu gibi bu romanı da belirsiz bir sonla noktalar. Farklı geçmişlerden gelen karakterler arasında iletişim ve ortak deneyimlere dayalı bağlantılar toplumun geleceğine dair umut dolu ihtimaller sunsa da ırkçılık ve

ayrıştırıcı söylemlerin toplumda baskın olması umut vaat etmemektedir. Sömürgecilik mirası ile günümüz gerçekleri arasında bir bağ kurarak, toplumsal olarak marjinalleşmiş figürlerin deneyimlerini ön plana çıkaran alternatif bir anlatı oluşturur ve okuyucuyu ulus ve kültür kavramlarını etnik kökene dayalı ve ayrıcalıklı kategoriler yerine tarihsel süreçte değişken kategoriler olarak düşünmeye teşvik eder. Bu sayede roman toplumsal değişim için bir talepte bulunur.

Bu tezin beşinci bölümünde *In the Falling Snow* romanında transkültürel belleğin kuşaklar arası ilişkilerde ve siyahi İngilizliğin gelişimindeki rolü incelenmektedir. Karayipli göçmenlerin üç neslini de konu eden roman, siyah diaspora deneyiminin değişen kültürel koşullarına odaklanır. Windrush nesli yaşlanırken, ikinci nesil hala göçün sonuçlarını yaşamakta ve kendini ait olmama duygusuyla tanımlamaktadır. Üçüncü nesil ise diasporik kimliğin ve farklı aidiyetlerin karmaşıklığını sergiler. Böylece roman, siyahi diasporanın dönüşümünün haritasını çıkararak sadece çeşitli dönemlerde kimliğin inşasını değil, aynı zamanda Britanya'nın kültürel dönüşümünü de gözler önüne serer. Windrush neslinde Earl savaş sonrası dönemde İngiltere'ye gelmiş bir göçmendir; oğlu Keith üvey annesi Brenda tarafından orta sınıf görgüsüyle büyütülmüş, babasına karşı yabancılaşmıştır. Keith'in oğlu Laurie de annesiyle yaşamakta, babasına karşı kendini yakın hissetmemektedir. Bu, Phillips'in ikinci nesil siyahi İngiliz bir karakteri ve çağdaş Britanya'da üçüncü nesil ve melez bir karakteri ayrıntılı olarak ele aldığı ilk romanıdır.

Göç, çağlar boyunca geçmişin kolektif imgelerini ve anlatılarını taşıyan belleğin hareketini beraberinde getirir. Earl'ün nesli hem sömürgeciliğin kolonilerde sebep olduğu yıkımın sonuçlarını gösterir hem de İngiltere'deki ırkçılığın ön plana çıktığı anlatıları sayesinde bir anlamda İngiliz milliyetçi söyleminin desteklediği homojen ulusu niteleyen kararlılık, tutarlılık, nezaket, incelik gibi özelliklere çok zıt bir İngiliz toplumu imajı çizer. Böylece bellek, baskın güçlerin kurduğu kolektif anlatıya karşı çıkarak farklı gerçekliklerin altını çizer. İngiltere'de yaşadığı dışlanma, hayal kırıklığı ve yerinden edinme deneyimlerinin Earl'de yarattığı travma, arkadaşı Ralph'in ırkçı gençler tarafından dövülerek öldürülmesiyle daha yıkıcı bir hal alır ve hayatının bir kısmını hastanede geçirmesine sebep olur. İngiltere onun için asla bir yuva olamamıştır, hatta Earl oğlunun İngiliz geleneklerini benimsemesine içerler. Romanın son bölümünde şimdiki zaman anlatımı bir anda kesilir ve Earl'ün geçmişini anlatan monoloğu başlar. Bu sayede bellek, zaman ve mekânsal sınırları aşarak günümüze ulaşır ve geçmişin günümüz üzerinde ne

kadar belirleyici olduğunu gösterir. Yerleşim, iş ve yeni bir hayat vaat eden ülkenin göçmen politikalarının neden olduğu yanılsamalar ve göçmenlerin hayalindeki ana yurt imajı Windrush kuşağını İngiltere'ye çeken başlıca nedenlerdendir. Earl'ün İngiltere'ye gelirken kurduğu hayaller ile İngiltere'de bir yaşlı bakım evinde yaşadığı hayat arasında uçurumlar vardır. Ne üniversite okumasına izin verilmiş ne güzel bir ev tutabilmiştir. Gittiği her yerde gözler ona çevrilmiş, hep öteki olduğu hissettirilmiştir. Earl'ün transkültürel yolculuğu Deneyimleri aslında tüm Windrush neslinin ortak deneyimlerini yansıtır ve İngiltere'nin transkültürel belleğinin de önemli bir bölümünü oluşturur.

Kuşaklar arasındaki ayrım, siyahi kültürel mirasın etkisinin de nesilden nesile azalmasıyla ve sosyo-tarihsel bağlamla değişen şartlarla şekillenir. Earl'ün deneyimi yuva özlemi ve ait olamama duygusuyla tanımlansa da oğlu Keith'in dâhil olduğu ikinci kuşak siyahi İngilizler için durum farklıdır. 1970 ve 1980lerde siyahi İngilizlerin hak mücadelelerine şahit olan Keith, babası gibi yuva özlemi içinde değildir fakat İngiltere'yi evi olarak da kabul edemez çünkü hala bazı mahallelerde siyahi olduğu için insanların kendisine rahatsız edici bir şekilde baktığını gözlemler. Bu anlamda Keith arada kalmış bir göçmen figürüdür. Eğitimli, iyi bir işte üst düzey bir pozisyonda çalışan biri olarak toplumdaki sosyo-kültürel politikaların değiştiğinin kanıtıdır fakat yine de kafasındaki siyahilik imajını hayatının merkezinde koyar, hatta oğlunun okulda yaşadığı sorunların da hep etnik kökeninden kaynaklandığına inanır. Karayipler Keith için bir gün mutlaka ziyaret edilmesi gereken mitik bir yerdir. Bir iş arkadaşı ile olan ilişkisinin bitmesiyle mesajların ifşa edilmesi sonucu işten uzaklaştırılan Keith eski eşi Annabelle ile de arada sırada sadece oğlu Laurie'nin problemleri için görüşür. İşten uzaklaşınca hep yazmak istediği kitabı için harekete geçen Keith, siyahi toplulukların müzik türleri üzerine araştırma yaparken oğlunun dinlediği indie ve hip-hop gibi türleri hiç hesaba katmaz. Hayalindeki siyahilik ve siyahi kökenlerin ötesine geçemediği için ve geçmişle de istediği gibi bir bağ kuramadığı için kitabını tamamlayamaz. Keith aslında atalarının mirasını alamadığını düşündüğü ve içinde bulunduğu toplumdaki değişimi de kavrayamadığı için eksiklik hisseder. Bu durum onu kendi kimliğinin çoğulluğuyla özdeşleşmekten alıkoyan bir kültürel arada kalmışlığa işaret eder.

Laurie ise kendisini siyahi kültür mirasıyla ya da diaspora deneyimiyle değil günümüz gençlik kültürüyle özdeşleştirir. Yürüyüşü, selam verme şekli, dinlediği müzikler gençler arasında yaygın bir kültürün yansımalarıdır. Ait olma ve ait olmama

sorunları, onun özdeşim tarzıyla çok da ilgili değildir, çünkü Laurie, babası ve dedesinden farklı olarak, kendisini etnik kökenle ya da yurt özlemiyle tanımlamaz. Bu nedenle Laurie'nin nesli ırkın kimlik kategorilerinde ve toplumsal ilişkilerde önemini yitirmeye başlaması ile ilişkilendirilebilir. Küreselleşmenin getirdiği teknoloji, ulaşım, iletişim gibi alanlardaki kolaylıklarla kültürel alışveriş arttığı için yeni neslin kimliği de bu doğrultuda şekillenir. Laurie arkadaşlarıyla karıştığı bir kavgada onların saygısını kazanmak için bıçak taşıdığı için polise ifade vermeye çağrılır. Keith polisin Laurie'ye ırkçılık yaptığını düşünür ama Laurie polisin siyahi olduğunu söyler ve babasının tepkisine anlam veremez. Babasına bireyselliğin öne çıktığı ilişkilerde kendi çabasıyla saygı kazanmanın önemini anlatır. Fakat Keith yine de Laurie'nin kendi ait olmama duygusunu yansıtmaya devam eder.

Laurie'nin kimlik inşası ayrıca transkültürel belleğin rotalarındaki değişikliği de gösterir. Keith Laurie'yi şehir turuna çıkarıp parlamento binası ve tarihi köprüleri gezdirir. Amacı oğlunda bu yerlere aidiyet kazandırmaktır ama fark eder ki Laurie zaten kendini şehre ait hissetmektedir. Keith aslında kendi kimlik krizini oğluna yansıtır. Emperyal mirasın parçası olan ve ulusal zaferlerin simgesi olan bu tarihi yerler "bellek mekânları" olarak düşünülebilir. Keith bu mekânların etrafındayken hala ait olamama duygusunu yaşarken, Laurie için bu mekânlar tehdit olmaktan çok uzaktır. Laurie'nin London Eye'in tepesindeyken uzaktaki Wembley stadyumuna bakıp heyecanlanması da geçmişi temsil eden bellek mekânlarından ziyade gelecekle ilgilendiğini gösterir. Bu bağlamda, roman Londra'yı üçüncü kuşak siyahi İngilizleri de kucaklayan ve aidiyet hissettiren bir metropol olarak tanımlar. Göçmen kuşaklar hem ülkenin kolektif belleğinin sınırlarını genişletir hem de ulusal kimliğin değişmesine katkıda bulunur. Böylece bellek mekânları da zamanla yeni anlamlar kazanarak daha kapsayıcı bir belleğe işaret ederler.

Romanda diğer bir transkültürel bağ da Windrush nesli ve ekonomik sebeplerle İngiltere'ye gelen Doğu Avrupalı göçmenlerin anıları aracılığıyla kurulur. Rolf beyaz bir Avrupalı olmasına rağmen tıpkı Earl ve Ralph gibi kalacak yer bulmakta zorlanmış, kimsenin çalışmak istemediği işlerde çalışmak zorunda kalmış bir göçmendir. Rolf'un kaldığı odayı tarif ettiği anlatısı Earl'ün anlatısına çok benzer. İkisi de çok küçük, havasız, karanlık ve pis bir odaya ederinden çok para vererek Londra'da yaşamak zorunda kalmıştır. Bu da aslında toplumsal hiyerarşilerde sınıf kategorisinin ne kadar etkili olduğunu göstermektedir. Phillips bu karşılaştırmayı özellikle etnik çeşitlilik ve

küreselleşmenin etkilerine rağmen toplumda yalnızca siyahi göçmenleri değil beyazları da hedef alan göçmen karşıtı bir tavrın baskın olduğunu anlatmak için yapar.

Phillip farklı göçmen grupları bir araya getirerek ırk kavramının sosyal hiyerarşilerde sınıf kadar ön planda olmadığı bir toplum betimler. Keith ve Polonyalı Danuta'nin ilişkisinde Keith kendini İngilizlikle özdeşleştirir. Danuta'ya ve yolda gördüğü yabancı öğrencilere beyaz İngilizlerin siyahilere baktığı gibi bakar ve İngiliz yaşam tarzını bilmedikleri için onları küçük görür. Keith'in kendisini onlardan üstün görmesinin sebebi üniversite mezunu, orta sınıf ve iyi bir işe sahip olmasıdır. Böyle ilişkileri belirleyen bir kategori olarak ırkın azalan etkisi, gelecek için daha iyi bir toplumsal düzene işaret etse de aslında hiyerarşiler azalmamakta sadece şekilde değiştirmektedir.

Romanın kimlik ve aidiyet meselelerine bakış açısı ırkın ötesine geçerek sosyal ilişkilerde daha kapsayıcı ve yeni ortaya çıkan kaygıları vurgular. Ayrıca, eski aidiyet kategorilerinin sınırlarının ötesinde farklı kültürlerle özdeşleşen üçüncü kuşağın tasviri siyah Atlantik belleğinin transkültürel yörüngelerini genişletir. Earl'ün ölümü siyahi Atlantik mirasının daha da silindiğine ve toplumsal değişimlerin geçmişe bakış açısını da değiştirebileceğine işaret eder. Laurie'nin siyahi diaspora sınırlarının ötesine geçmesi ve Keith'in kendini ulusal kimlikle özdeşleştirmesi ve ait olma duygusu, çağdaş kimlik siyasetinde ırk politikalarının da değiştiğini gösterir. Bu anlamda roman iyimser bir tablo çizse de dışlayıcı söylemlerin toplumda hala geçerli olduğunun da altını çizer.

Bu analizler ışığında Phillips'in bu romanlarda özcü söylemlere karşı bir anlatı oluşturarak transkültürel bellek ile ulusal çerçevede belirlenen kolektif bellek arasındaki farkı açığa çıkardığı ve okuyucunun geçmişi yeni bir bakış açısıyla yeniden gözden geçirmesini talep ettiği görülmüştür. Phillips okuyucuyu toplumsal ve tarihi olaylar hakkında daha derin düşünmeye iten bir belirsizlik yaratarak tartıştığı problemlere net bir cevap önermez, kendi sesini karakterlere empoze etmez ve karakterlerini saf iyi ya da kötü olarak betimlemez. Eserlerinin kronolojik olarak incelenmesiyle Phillips'in edebi üretimi boyunca bir yazar olarak gelişimi dikkat çeker. Son romanlarında ilk çalışmalarına göre daha gelişmiş ve çok katmanlı bir anlatım yapısı kullanır. Geçmişi anlatırken sömürgecilik dönemine değinmeden daha güncel meseleleri ele alarak tematik içeriğin anlatım tonundaki kasıtlı belirsizliğe yansımasında ustalaşır. Karakterlerin duygu durumlarındaki ve konumlarındaki çeşitlilik ve farklı kültürel geçmişlere sahip karakterler

arasındaki beklenmedik karşılaşmalar da yazarın hızla değişen toplumsal dinamikler ve güncel kimlik politikalarına katkıda bulunma çabalarının bir parçasıdır.

Phillips, incelenen romanlarda belleğin kimlik inşasındaki rolüne dikkat çekerek hem bireysel hem ulusal kimliğin geçmişten günümüze nasıl şekillendiğini vurgular. Romanlar aynı zamanda siyahi diasporanın toplumsal konumunun çağlar boyunca dönüşümünü de vurgular. Romandaki siyahi kimlik temsillerinin çeşitliliği, kimlik, kültür ve ulus kavramlarının sabit ve homojen olduğu düşüncesine dayanan özcü kimlik yaklaşımlarına bir yanıt olarak düşünülebilir. Belleğin sınırlar ötesi hareketinin tasviriyle siyahi diaspora deneyiminin çoğulluğu ve bir öze indirgenemeyeceği fikri ön plana çıkar. Özellikle günümüz Britanya'sını betimlerken toplumsal hiyerarşilerde ırkın daha az vurgulandığı bir toplum resmi çizse de ütopik bir gelecek tasvir etmekten kaçınır. Phillips geleneksel İngiliz ulusal kimliğinin bir revizyonunu sunan bu romanlarda transkültürel bellek aracılığı ile özcü, ırkçı, milliyetçi söylem ve pratikleri sorunsallaştırarak geçmişe farklı bir bakış açısı sunar ve son sözü okuyucuya bırakır.

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Soyadı / Surname : Kırpıklı
Adı / Name : Deniz
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