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Abstract

Dwelling places - houses, hostels, basements, bedsits - established themselves as key arenas of contestation in the narration of early post-war black British settlement. It was here that the panics and pleasures surrounding black immigration tended to accumulate and stage themselves. As Britain's doors were opened to its colonies and former colonies through the Nationality Act of 1948, those doors guarding the nation's residential hinterlands were being effectively dosed. Housing was, perhaps more than any other threshold in the 1950s, subject to a 'colour bar'. Its fortification could be read in the proliferation of those now hackneyed signs of racial exclusion displayed in the windows of shops, guest houses and hotels: 'Rooms to Let. Sorry, No Dogs and No Coloureds'. Here it was the dwelling place, not the official point of entry, at which the regulation, policing and deferral of black settlement was to be most effectively mythologized.

JAMES PROCTER

Descending the Stairwell: Dwelling Places and Doorways in Early Post-War Black British Writing

Dwelling places – houses, hostels, basements, bedsits – established themselves as key arenas of contestation in the narration of early post-war black British settlement. It was here that the panics and pleasures surrounding black immigration tended to accumulate and stage themselves. As Britain's doors were opened to its colonies and former colonies through the Nationality Act of 1948, those doors guarding the nation's residential hinterlands were being effectively closed. Housing was, perhaps more than any other threshold in the 1950s, subject to a 'colour bar'. Its fortification could be read in the proliferation of those now hackneyed signs of racial exclusion displayed in the windows of shops, guest houses and hotels: 'Rooms to Let. Sorry, No Dogs and No Coloureds'. Here it was the dwelling place, not the official point of entry, at which the regulation, policing and deferral of black settlement was to be most effectively mythologized. The British homestead took on the significance of a national frontier in this context. Those properties whose thresholds were 'transgressed' by the black settler quickly came to display the symptoms and anxieties being diagnosed more generally by the white national community. The articulation of fears surrounding black sexuality, hedonism and hygiene – in short the pathologising of black settlement in 1950s Britain – was ritualistically structured through the dwelling place.

Housing would persist as a highly charged symbolic venue in the following decades. In 1964, Conservative MP Peter Griffiths won a seat in the Labour stronghold of Smethwick with the unofficial slogan, 'If you want a Nigger Neighbour, vote Labour'. Enoch Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' (1968) speech – so often read as the high-tide mark in popular political racism – imagines the colonization of Britain's inner-cities through the invasion and desecration of a seven-roomed house in Wolverhampton, the last white house in the street. In the 1970s, housing remained a key, if diminished arena of contestation. The fiercely fought campaigns of the Bengali Housing Action Group (BHAG); the criminalization of shebeen culture, and the 'New Cross Massacre' of January 1981, which led directly to the Brixton riots of April, are testament to the continued racialization of

the dwelling place into the 1980s.

This paper is less concerned with that neglected cultural history of the dwelling place however, than it is with the absence of a vocabulary to 'write' it.¹ There is, I would argue, virtually 'no place' for expressions of 'dwelling' within the context of what Stuart Hall usefully calls the 'diasporization' of contemporary black experience.² I take 'diasporization' here to refer to current preoccupations with the black subject as a diasporic, or cosmopolitan migrant subject. In terms of black British discourse this might be said to include Homi Bhabha's interrogations into migrant identity and Paul Gilroy's recent research on the 'Black Atlantic', as well as the fiction of Salman Rushdie and Caryl Phillips. That complex, diffuse and highly influential body of writing has, I suggest, tended to embrace and celebrate a condition of 'homelessness' or 'home as everywhere', while viewing the dwelling place with a certain distaste.³ If, as Helen Tiffin argues, the house is a 'motif of indigenization' in literatures of Independence, the symbolic foundation of communal and national belonging, then the dislocated, uprooted migrant would appear essentially homeless.⁴ This logic needs complicating.

The celebration of homelessness in much black British and migrant discourse of recent years has entailed a forgetting of earlier, alternative strategies and versions of survival in the new homeland. The shifting relationships both to dwelling and dwelling places over the last fifty years have far too often been elided in contemporary criticism and theory, where the migrant subject has tended to be an ahistorical, universal subject. Here homelessness and itinerancy have become constants in the analysis of black literary and cultural production. Within this framework Sam Selvon and Hanif Kureishi, George Lamming and Salman Rushdie can be read collectively as dislocated citizens for whom home is equally elusive.

At stake here is more than a literary emblem, but the forgetting of a particular *practice* of settlement that was crucial to the formation of communal strategies of black resistance in the 1950s. In what is too often narrated as a 'pre-political' phase of black British history, it tends to be overlooked that it was in relation to the racialized dwelling place that some of the first instances of a black communal politics were to take shape.⁵ The South Asian 'mortgage clubs', Jamaican 'pardner' and Trinidadian 'sou sou' systems were unprecedented in this sense, working as collectives to facilitate property purchase, long before the more coherent mobilizing forces of Black Power got under way.⁶ The struggles by these communal organizations to become *housed* need accommodating alongside the itinerant agendas of diasporic discourse if this 'other side' of migrant culture is to be told. Dwelling, it is argued here, constitutes a troubling emblem within the context of prevailing diasporic theories: its very 'tenacity' unsettles currently fashionable notions of the rootless, wandering, essentially 'nomadic' migrant subject.

The significance I am attaching to the dwelling place as a symbolic venue sits uneasily in relation to the agendas structuring black British and migrant discourse in the 1980s and 1990s then. Here the sophisticated itinerancy of the 'unhoused' metropolitan migrant carries a degree of prestige that it never did in the 1950s. In comparison with the (no less complex) dwelling place of the pioneering settlers, current emphases on 'homelessness' have become a somewhat privileged mode of locating 'home'. The distaste for the dwelling place that emerges in recent writing can be partly explained by the new lifestyles they accommodate. For example, the all-male gatherings that form a substantial part of the basement culture in writings of the 1950s, have since given way to family lives, frequently divided along gender and generational lines. Here the dysfunctional domestic worlds experienced by Hyacinth in Joan Riley's *The Unbelonging* (1985) or Karim in Kureishi's *The Buddha of Suburbia* (1990) hint at a much more widespread condition: 'I pulled the curtains on the back garden. The room immediately seemed to contract. Tension rose. I couldn't wait to get out of the house now, I don't know why'.⁷ And yet Karim's claustrophobia here is symptomatic of a more general desire in contemporary black British writing, to be 'always somewhere else', perpetually journeying *in-between* destinations.⁸

This paper turns to the literary context of the 1950s and early 1960s in order to recover alternative narratives of dwelling within black British writing. That first wave of cultural production by West Indian artists living in post-war London is instructive here. It is within the rich body of prose fiction left over from this period that some of the most extended accounts of the dwelling place were to appear. Whether in the struggles to find and sustain accommodation in texts like Andrew Salkey's *Escape to an Autumn Pavement* (1960), James Berry's *A Man at the Door* (1962) and E.R. Braithwaite's *To Sir With Love* (1959), or in the basement rooms of George Lamming's *The Emigrants* (1954), the dwelling place constitutes a repetitious referent. Samuel Selvon, in particular, was to mark out the dwelling place as a key symbolic enclave in this period. From his re-invention of the basement room as 'yard' in *The Lonely Londoners* (1956), to the housing conflicts in *Ways of Sunlight* (1958) and *The Housing Lark* (1965), Selvon's perspectives form part of a larger discursive response to the dwelling place in black literatures of the 1950s and 1960s:⁹

The question of having a roof overhead becomes very important in a cold country ... From my observation of the immigrants in London, these are the things they strive for most desperately. It also becomes very difficult for them to even get a room to stay in because of social pressure and therefore, it acquires a greater desperation, a greater need and urgency to make sure that you have a room at least that you can return to, that you can at least retire to.¹⁰

Here Selvon remembers the difficulty of finding a place to live in Britain in

the 1950s, a situation which he recorded in those works listed above. Of particular interest here is the way that he marks out the dwelling place as a locus of 'return' and 'retirement', as opposed to escape or flight. Like many of his West Indian contemporaries, Selvon viewed the dwelling place as an enclave or sanctuary within a wider, less tenable urban environment.

Consider, for example, the sustaining underground haven that is Moses Aloetta's basement room in Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners*:

Nearly every Sunday morning, like if they going to church, the boys liming in Moses room, coming together for a oldtalk, to find out the latest gem, what happening, when is the next fete ... Always every Sunday morning they coming to Moses, like if is confession, sitting down on the bed, on the floor, on the chairs, everybody asking what happening but nobody know what happening, laughing kiff-kiff at a joke ... How many Sunday morning get-togethers in the room: he must make a joke of it during the week and say: 'You coming to church Sunday?'¹¹

In contrast to the random, aimless trajectories of the boys as they wander through the streets of London, Moses' basement exerts a magnetic pull, providing a pattern to their movements. This 'coming together' constitutes a kind of congregation: the basement is a 'church' with Moses (as his name suggests) presiding over affairs, offering consolation, direction, advice. As the veteran Londoner, or 'Mister London', Moses finds himself in the role of 'welfare officer'.¹² It is here that the gathering exchange memories – the 'oldtalk' of the Caribbean, as well as 'the latest gen' concerning their new lives in England. Moses' house becomes the birth-place for a projection and proliferation of narratives that potentially marginalize the London beyond its walls, the repository of a 'marooned' Caribbean community.

It was George Lamming's *The Emigrants* (1954) however, not Selvon's London fictions, that provided the most persistently 'housebound' narrative of this phase of writing. Published some two years before *The Lonely Londoners*, Lamming's was the first post-war black novel to be set in Britain, and yet, unlike Selvon's work, it remains curiously neglected in available criticism. *The Emigrants*, I would argue, eludes the dominant vocabularies of black British discourse: it exposes the need to open up enquiries of the drifting migrant to include notions of dwelling. A dwelling is more than a house or habitus in this context – it also connotes the stasis of the verb 'to dwell', signifying a poetics of situatedness, positionality and locatedness.

George Lamming migrated from Barbados to Britain in 1950. *The Emigrants*, his second novel, was also the first to record the experience of post-war Caribbean settlement in England. It describes the journey of a wide cross-section of West Indians: the Governor and Tornado, Trinidadians who both served in the RAF; the Jamaican, Collis, a writer;

Philip, an aspiring law student; Dickson, a school teacher from Barbados. The novel has a tripartite structure, and is split into the following sections: 'A Voyage', 'Rooms and Residents' and 'Another Time'. Of particular interest here is the main body of the section, 'Rooms and Residents', in which London appears through a series of (mostly basement) interiors.

In terms of this substantial 'indoors', I want to concentrate on just two basement dwellings which, in themselves, seem to inform one another: Fred Hill's barber shop and Miss Dorking's flat and hair salon. The barber shop/hair salon are key urban centres in this and other black British fictions (see Larry's barber shop in Salkey's *Escape to An Autumn Pavement* (1960) for a strikingly similar contemporary account). In his essay on 'Black Hair/Style Politics', Kobena Mercer notes the preponderance of barber shops in black neighbourhoods and the possibilities they open for 'expressing the aspirations of black people historically excluded from access to official social institutions of representation and legitimation in urban, industrialised societies of the capitalist First World'.¹³ The barber shops considered here operate in this way, to accommodate a communal consciousness and open up territories of black expression. They represent independent, if fragile, urban economies outside the dominant centres of black employment in the 1950s.

The opening section of *The Emigrants* describes a series of horizontal journeys across space, firstly between the islands of Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, Jamaica, Grenada, Martinique and Guadeloupe as the emigrants gather on the Golden Image, followed by their voyage to England and culminating in a train journey from Plymouth to Paddington. In contrast the second section: 'Rooms and Residents', opens with a detailed account of a downward journey into the basement room of Fred Hill's barber shop. This shift from horizontal to vertical trajectories, from 'bearing across' to movement down, indicates a shift in the novel, from surface to depth, translation to etymology, migration to settlement. The novel's subterranean locations are deeply ambivalent spaces, functioning as prisons (underworlds, graves, dungeons, jails); wombs (roots, foundations, sources, embryonic sites that are invested with an immanent potential for change, growth, or 'uprising') and as fortresses (enclaves or sites of resistance). As they gather in these submerged worlds, the emigrants come to occupy, possess and disturb the foundations of the metropolis.

In 'Rooms and Residents', the narrative shifts back and forth between basement, house and hostel. Fred Hill's barber shop, Miss Dorking's flat/hair salon and Tornado and Lilian's bedsit are exclusively West Indian underground territories that are interwoven, almost consecutively, with the homes of the novel's English and anglophile characters: the Pearson's, the Warden's, the Redhead's. Transaction between the black world below and the white metropolis above is an infrequent and always negative experience: at once more difficult and disorienting than that generally

performed in post-colonial migrant writings, as the opening description of 'Rooms and Residents' testifies:

The men couldn't see each other in the dark, but they took it for granted that they were not in the wrong place. When the door closed, blocking the light, the street disappeared like a thief, and the steps led them feebly in a crooked angle along the walls down towards the basement. The change was too obvious for comment, and their silence suggested that the atmosphere had produced a similar sensation in each. The stairs descended uncertainly like raindrops trickling down the wounded face of a rock. The angle sharpened here, the next step was missing, and suddenly like a blow on the head, the foot made a final drop, and the body fought for its balance before preparing to move on. They drew closer now, waiting without a word for someone to explore the dark.¹⁴

Here Lamming dwells on the crooked, convoluted stairway which marks a significant threshold between the white metropolis (above/outside) that the emigrants have just left, and the black world (below/inside) they are about to enter. The winding descent takes the men through darkness, missing steps and unexpected twists and turns. The discontinuous staircase, with its gaps and angles are difficult to traverse and the group's footsteps describe a hesitant, jerky pathway of stops and starts concluding in a jarring, destabilizing 'final drop'. During this tentative descent, the men remain totally silent, not one word is exchanged between them. This communicative fracture reiterates the disjointed journey down the stairs. Together, the absence of steps and speech recompose this interstitial location as one of silence, fissures, faults and gaps. This tricky, tense (sub)terrain is more fraught with danger, more difficult to transgress than migrant discourse frequently suggests.

In the introduction to his collection of essays, *The Location of Culture*, Homi Bhabha enlists the African-American artist, Renee Green and her imaginative evocation of the stairwell to foreground his thesis on the migrant condition:

The stairwell as liminal space, in-between the designations of identity, becomes the process of symbolic interaction, the connective tissue that constructs the difference between upper and lower, black and white. The hither and thither of the stairwell, the temporal movement and passage that it allows, prevents identities at either end of it from settling into primordial identities. This interstitial passage between fixed identifications, opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy.¹⁵

Although the liminal staircases of Bhabha and Lamming offer a passage between worlds, the nature of this passage is constructed in very different ways. If for Bhabha the 'symbolic interaction' allowed by the staircase offers 'cultural hybridity', then for Lamming the staircase is an emblem of 'imposed hierarchy': emphasizing rather than deconstructing 'the

difference between upper and lower, black and white'. The divergent trajectories of these two stairwells, I suggest, signpost the conflicting positions of their two authors. Lamming's emphasis on borders, roots, etymologies and resistance point to nationalist concerns within the unlikely trope of migrancy. These concerns exceed the cosmopolitan migrant position of Bhabha, whose stairwell's 'hither and thither' is a groping and stumbling in *The Emigrants*. The enlightenment and continuity that the stairway's 'connective tissue' offers Bhabha is darkness and discontinuity for Lamming's emigrants. The gloomy underworld in which they find themselves brings the 'movement and passage' of Bhabha's staircase to an abrupt halt in 'an underground that is both prison and hell'.¹⁶ In this novel the rigid demarcation of 'indoors' and 'outdoors' both recognizes and reverses (the emigrants rarely dwell beyond the *interiors* of this text) the racialized domestic threshold of the 1950s and the 'colour bar' that cordons it. As such, these thresholds work outside the terms of Bhabha's 'third space'. The cosmopolitan celebrity's 'art of translation' in which, Timothy Brennan argues: 'the distinction between inside and outside has been obliterated' and 'national boundaries are meaningless' potentially erases the specific historical conditions of the 1950s threshold.¹⁷

These thresholds become the site of a prolonged narrative focus in *The Emigrants*. So the 'hard rigid nakedness' of Fred Hill's cell-like barber shop, with its door 'shut tight', solitary barred window, 'imperviously cold' stone floor and air of 'dampness' clearly demarcates a carceral space (p. 130). The visit from a policeman, following the arrest of Higgins as a suspected drug pedlar, further marks out the barber shop as jail, a criminalized underworld. As the Jamaican remarks, 'they think there is some black underground connecting every one of us' (p. 157). However, the basement room is more than a space of confinement. The doorway that takes the emigrants into the barber's shop signals a new sense of belonging and inclusion: 'Tornado had found a knob which began to turn slowly in his hand. He withdrew his hand and stepped aside, and the door slid back' (p. 157). Here the basement's threshold performs an act of self-regulation as the room *itself* admits the men. The 'crease of light' that appears from behind the door signifies a salvation that is qualified in the expressions of 'surprise and rescue' on the emigrant's faces (p. 127). The friendly exchanges that follow, along with Fred Hill's, interminable banter with the customers, 'his immediate community', create an atmosphere of exchange and dialogue that is reiterated through the symbolic layout of the room and the reflexive quality of the mirrors and photographs that run around it (p. 128):

They turned to admire the photographs that were stuck on the walls, photographs of an American jazz band whose members had given their autographs to the barber. These faces smiling and expansive betrayed a curious, reciprocal intimacy between them and the instruments that were held

so lovingly to their mouths. The barber felt their admiration, and turned to give information about the different players. (p. 131)

These pictures demarcate a new territory in London. The basement draws together the dispersed representatives of the African diaspora. Gathered within its walls the unlikely West Indian, African and Afro-American congregation comprise a depth of experience and histories *in* British soil. The 'reciprocal intimacy' that flows between the players and their instruments, exceeds the frames of these photographs, emerging in the 'new intimacy' of the customers, whose admiration for the pictures is returned by the barber's histories of them (p. 135). It is here, beneath the streets of London, that the emigrants reinforce and refine their sense of communal and colonial identity:

'The main historical point o' dis age is dis ... It is de age of colonial concern.' 'Dat's why we in all the colonies will fight,' ... His eagerness to make the point had turned almost to anger. 'Fight,' he added vehemently. 'Tis the time to fight.' (p. 130)

Here Fred Hill asserts the importance of an explicitly politicized group consciousness, while his community of customers listen in 'respectful and approving silence' (p. 130). The barber shop then is much more than a site of incarceration: it accommodates the possibilities of up-rising or revolution.

Indeed the boundaries of the basement, assigned and policed by the West Indian group, are equivalent to frontiers in the novel. Despite the wider sense of urban apartheid around them, this dwelling place appears to practice its own series of exclusions, border definitions and controls. This production of defensible space becomes clear when a policeman arrives:

'Come in,' the barber shouted. The men who were squatting by the door had got up to make room, but no one entered. The barber jerked his head round again and shouted his invitation.

'I doan' think you can hear from outside,' Tornado said ... The men who stood nearest the door agreed.

'Open up there,' the barber said, pointing the scissors from one man to the brass knob that turned the lock. (p. 157)

The doorway that earlier relinquished to Tornado's touch, now becomes a barrier: it is locked. The barber's 'shouted' invitations go unheard on the other side of the door which now establishes a communicative barrier between inside and outside, black and white worlds in the novel, underlining the difficulty of transaction between them. Even when open, the policeman 'remain[s] in the doorway', hesitating on the threshold between territories, his passage momentarily arrested (p. 157). The basement is more than a prison, it is also a fortress. In the subterranean world of Fred Hill's basement it is, ironically, the policeman who finds

himself subject to the emigrants' collective surveillance in this new Caribbean enclave beneath the metropolis.

From the Pearson's house, the narrative returns to the basement location and another West Indian gathering (this time exclusively female), at Miss Dorking's home/hair salon:

This was a womb which the world (meaning those other than you) was not aware of. The world passed by on the outside, intent or callous, but ignorant of the intimacy and the warmth of this house, in this corner, where those women were seated around a table, a small table with three legs and a rectangular surface, old, polished and efficient. (p. 145)

Again here, there is a strong sense of division between outside and inside worlds. The view from Miss Dorking's window 'was abruptly blocked by houses which came up like a wall between two foreign territories' (p. 151). Just as the black congregation at Mr Hill's are keen to register their difference along with their 'brotherhood', the women speak '[o]ne voice in four or five keys. The incidents varied in four or five, but the results were, in essence the same' (p. 145). Congregating around a small table, there is an 'intimacy' to the women's conversations that is absent at the Pearson's for example (an English couple visited by Collis), where furniture marks individuation, distance, separateness. The sense of community, although not without its tensions, derives in part, from the hostile white environment around them and their shared anxieties of finding a 'decent' partner (p. 149). This is, in contrast to the men at Fred Hill's, who argue over the age of colonial concern and the problem of national identity. Lamming, in reserving the novel's 'major' themes as sites of male enquiry, contributes to what was an overwhelmingly masculinist period of literary production.

Nevertheless these West Indian women do establish effective bonds through a collective remembrance of the Caribbean. This is more than a nostalgic 'look back' to the homeland. As the Caribbean landscape – 'down town Port-o'-Spain', 'Marine Square', 'the Savannah' – begins to accrue, and gain depth within Miss Dorking's basement, the foundations of the white metropolis are symbolically disturbed, forced as they are to house an environment that normally exists out-of-bounds (pp. 145-6). This is reflected in Miss Dorking's use of her rented basement, illegally, as a hairdressers:

You know you ain't suppose to do it without a license, an' I ain't think she got any license. 'Tis different from back home where you could set up a little place an' it ain't nobody's business. Here every damn thing is something for papers, permission and signing here an' there, an' the income tax an' all that. You got to be so careful. (p. 146)

Like the basement rooms of the West Indian couple, Lilian and Tornado, Miss Dorking's flat is structured around an everyday life in the Caribbean.

For example, Lilian moves a bottle from in front of the mirror to a corner: "'Tis better there", she says, "I always hear the ol' people say, never let glass stare glass in the face". The domestic scene evoked from within this basement's walls exists outside the national community of 1950s London, with its pots of boiling rice and pervasive 'odour of onions and garlic' (pp.183-4). In contrast to the Pearson's home which is governed by laws, codes and conventions (a glass of sherry and a stroll in the garden before dinner are routine rituals), Miss Dorking's underworld exists beyond the boundaries of English jurisdiction. This 'little room' is run as it would be 'back home': the basement represents a 'pocket' or enclave that re-houses the Caribbean within the white metropolis.

This is reiterated in the arrival of the mysterious Frederick (a failed African missionary), who the women take to be a policeman and who threatens to violate the subterranean enclave:

He found the knob and turned it, but the door remained shut. It was bolted on the inside. He tried the knob again but no one opened ... Frederick rapped at the door again, while Miss Dorking extracted the rolled strip of brown paper from the partition and peeped through the crease of light. Frederick looked about him, trying to take in the geography of the place, and Miss Dorking saw him clearly. (p. 165)

Like the policeman earlier, Frederick finds his progression arrested at the doorway between symbolic territories: in both cases it is the West Indian community that regulate the borders of their domain, turning the prison into a fortress. It is Miss Dorking who is given the power to police her property and carry out a secret surveillance of its threatened threshold as Frederick struggles to locate himself.

Post-war black British writing then does not simply reverse the figure of the house as it appears in 'national' literatures, redefining it as a motif of dispossession or displacement. The sites of accommodation considered above operate, perhaps unexpectedly, as markers of location, possession, and of belonging. As such, the dwelling place offers a contradictory and challenging emblem within the context of prevailing ideas surrounding diasporic identities. The newly occupied metropolitan residences within black British literatures of the 1950s are not merely 'safe-houses' within a larger, more hostile, or unaccommodating urban environment. They are also private, exclusive and exclusionary territories, West Indian strongholds, 'colonized' sections of London, unfamiliar, unknown and unwelcoming to white Londoners. In this sense, migrant discourse does not and cannot signify solely in terms of the dislocations afforded by translation: the politics and poetics of location, place, position are crucial sites of enquiry in even the most 'mobile' of genres.

NOTES

I would like to thank Alison Donnell for her careful reading and comments on this paper.

1. There is still a good deal of work to be done on the cultural history of the dwelling place, and this paper represents part of a wider block of my research into 'The Cultural Politics of Dwelling in Black British Discourse - 1948-1981'.
2. Stuart Hall, 'New Ethnicities', in *Black Film/British Cinema*, ICA Document 7, p. 30.
3. Timothy Brennan, *Salman Rushdie and the Third World: Myths of a Nation* (London: Macmillan, 1989), pp. 61-70.
4. Helen Tiffin, 'New Concepts of Person and Place', in *A Sense of Place in the New Literatures in English*, ed. by Peggy Nightingale (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1986), p. 23.
5. For a more thorough analysis and attack on the notion of a 'pre-political' black British history see, 'The 1951-55 Conservative Government and the Racialization of Black Immigration', in *Inside Babylon: The Caribbean Diaspora in Britain*, ed. by Winston James and Clive Harris (London: Verso, 1993).
6. See A. Sivanandan, 'From Resistance to Rebellion', in A. Sivanandan, *A Different Hunger: Writings on Racism and Resistance* (London: Pluto, 1982), p. 6.
7. Hanif Kureishi, *The Buddha of Suburbia* (London: Faber & Faber, 1990), pp. 4-5.
8. Kureishi, *The Buddha of Suburbia*, p. 94.
9. Samuel Selvon, *The Lonely Londoners* (Essex: Longman, 1956), p. 105. See also 'Waiting for Aunty to Cough', 'Brackley and the Bed', 'Obeah in the Grove' and 'Basement Lullaby' in *Ways of Sunlight* (Essex: Longman, 1958).
10. 'Interview with Samuel Selvon', by Peter Nazareth, *World Literature Written in English*, 18, 2, 1979, pp. 420-37.
11. Samuel Selvon, *The Lonely Londoners* (Essex: Longman, 1956), p. 140.
12. Selvon, *The Lonely Londoners*, p. 25.
13. Kobena Mercer, *Welcome to the Jungle: New Positions in Black Cultural Studies* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 100.
14. George Lamming, *The Emigrants* (London: Michael Joseph, 1954), p. 127. All further references are to this edition and are included in the text.
15. Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 4.
16. Sandra Paquet, *The Novels of George Lamming* (London: Heinemann, 1982), p. 37.
17. Brennan, *Salman Rushdie and the Third World*, p. 60.