


Is multiculturalism appropriate for the twenty-first century?



Multiculturalism
Cosmopolitanism
Hybridity
Transculturalism
Interculturality

A politics of identity?
Multicultural citizenship?



- "Cultural identity [...] is a matter of 'becoming' as well as 'being'. It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture. Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. [...] identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past."

(Hall, Cultural Identity and Diaspora p.225)

- Vertovec & Cohen → (*Migration, Diasporas and Transnationalism*, 1999)
- Diaspora as a social form: victimization; alienation; loss

"loss and hope"
- b) Diaspora as a form of consciousness: paradoxical nature → discrimination & exclusion + heritage
- → "home away from home"; "here & there"; "roots" & "routes" → being and becoming
- c) Diaspora as a form of cultural production: production and reproduction of social and cultural transnational phenomena → "cut'n'mix"; Bloomsday; U2; Riverdance.

Multiculturalism

political & social dimension –
ethnic & religious identities +
national identity

1. Old concepts

Enlightenment; Universalism;
Progress- “citizen of the
world”.

Cosmopolitanism

multidimensional concept –
simultaneous loyalties;
transcends the model of state-
nation.

Hybridism → + hierarchy of
power related with encounter
of cultures; intersection of
discourses & social practices.

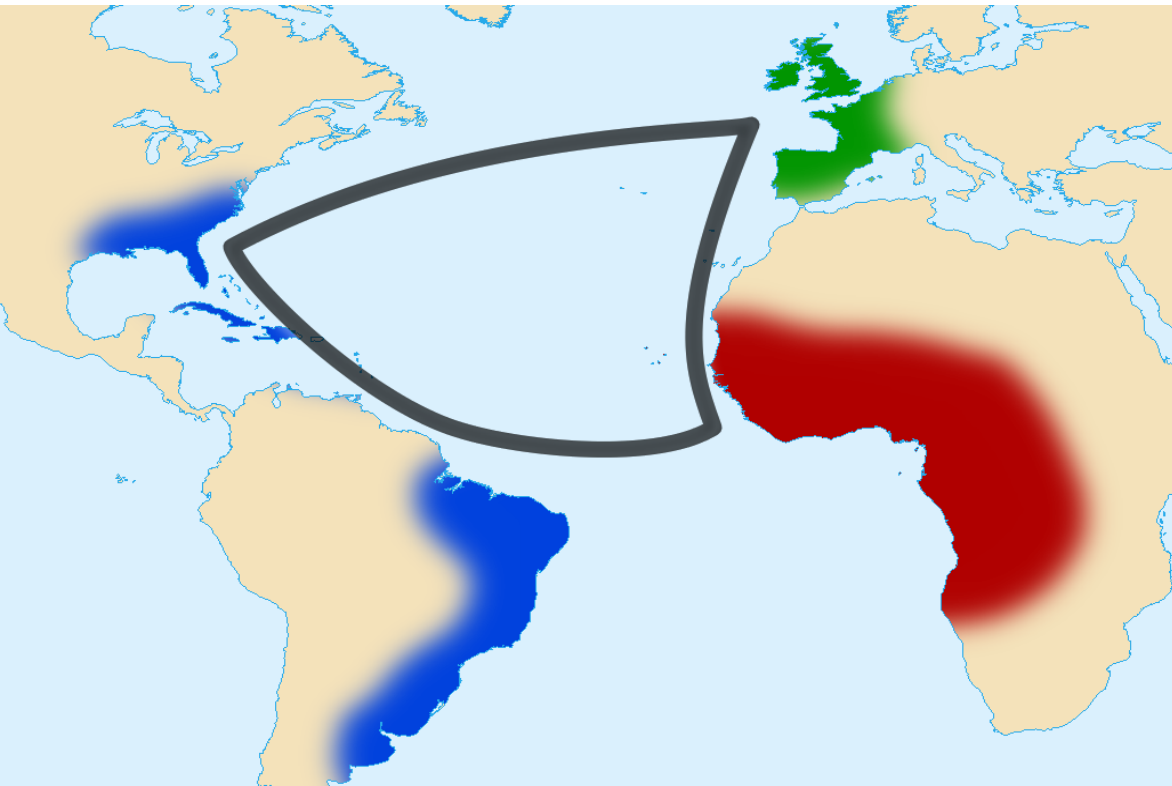
2. Homi Bhabha → a) global
cosmopolitanism (in power)

b) Vernacular
cosmopolitanism:

migrant, refugee; minority;
women → metaphors of
translations – strategies of
survival



What is home?



Edward Kamau Brathwaite.

***History of the Voice.* London: New Beacon Books, 1984**

- “Language from the Caribbean, the process of using English in a different way from the ‘norm’. English in a new sense as I prefer to call it. English in an ancient sense. English in a very traditional sense. And sometimes not English at all, but *language*.” (Brathwaite 1984. 5)

- Caribbean plurality:

English, French, Dutch & Spanish.

- Creole English, ***nation language*** (the language of slaves and labourers, the servants brought by the conquistador).

- Remnants of ancestral languages: the Amerindian; Hindi; Chinese; African languages.

- ***Nation language*** → an English of the submerged, surrealist experience and sensibility.

- *Nation language* in contrast to *dialect* (p.13)

- A strategy; oral tradition; *calypso*; *kaiso* (and reggae) & literature

Edward Kamau Brathwaite

Bridgetown, Barbados 1930.

- went to Cambridge Univ. 1949.

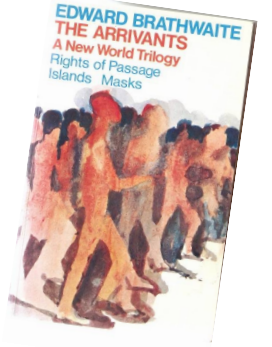
Casa de las Américas Award 2011

-Periodising Postwar **Black Britain**: 1948-1998

22 June 1948 → *SS Empire Windrush* docked at Tilbury and 492 West Indian emigrants disembarked . “age of innocence”= black as a singular, unifiable, internally consistent sign - Nationality Act of 1948 → Britain encouraged immigration from its colonies and former colonies = the period of the ‘open door policy’

‘WELCOME HOME’

Example: [Kamau Brathwaite](#)



1950s-1960s → Notting Hill riots X racialised white national Community
in the late 60s – prose-based narratives

1970s – 1980s → “black” became detached from its negative connotations and was reclaimed as a marker of pride: ‘black is beautiful’ → difference and alterity (Stuart Hall ‘New Ethnicities’) - a domestic feminist politics that was being notably sidelined within the masculinist street-based formations.

Black has been reconfigured and celebrated for its multi-accentuality → “solidarity” - poetry-based cultural production; “dub poetry”

Example: [Linton Kwesi Johnson](#); [Grace Nichols](#); [Benjamin Zephaniah](#)

1980s – 1990s → Gay and feminist cultural productions. “Black” was being evoked less as a ‘racial’ or biological signifier than as an ‘imagined community’, an ‘ethnicity’ → to draw attention to its own constructedness, its potential as a constitutive, rather than reflexive formation. Examples: [Fred D’Aguiar](#); [Salman Rushdie](#); [John Agard](#); [Caryl Phillips](#); Hanif Kureishi’s “cheering fictions” → *historicity*

1990-2010 →

Arundhati Roy *The God of Small Things* (1998);

Amitav Ghosh’s *The Shadow Lines* (1998) & *The Hungry Tide* (2005);

Kiran Desai’s *The Inheritance of Loss* (2006).

Wide Sargasso Sea (1966)

Characters:

Christophine

Servant boy Sass and Godfrey

Mr. Mason

Annette & Alexander Cosway

Antoinette

Pierre

Daniel

Place: Coulibri estate; Spanish Town

PART ONE : Antoinette's childhood

- first-person narrative
- family history
- first & second dreams

PART TWO: Rochester's narrative

- letters to his father
- letters to Daniel
- relationship with Antoinette vs. Bertha, Marionette;, Marionetta, Antoinetta
- Amélie

PART THREE: Antoinette

Grace Poole

LISTEN MR. OXFORD DON

John Agard

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ywy-Tthdg7w>

Me not no Oxford don
me a simple immigrant
from Clapham Common
I didn't graduate
I immigrate

But listen Mr Oxford don
I'm a man on de run
and a man on de run
is a dangerous one

I ent have no gun
I ent have no knife
but mugging the Queen's English
is the story of my life
I dont need no axe
to Split/ up yu syntax
I dont need no hammer
to mash/ up yu grammar

I warning you Mr Oxford don
I'm a wanted man
and a wanted man
is a dangerous one

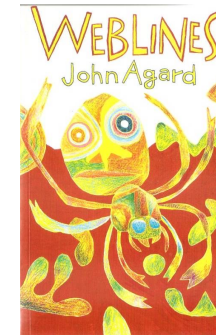
Dem accuse me of assault
on the Oxford dictionary
imagine a concise peaceful man like me/
dem want me serve time
for inciting rhyme to riot
but I tekking it quiet
down here in Clapham Common

I'm not a violent man Mr Oxford don
I only armed wit mih human breath
but human breath
is a dangerous weapon

So mek dem send one big word after me
I ent serving no jail sentence
I slashing suffix in self-defence
I bashing future with presente tense
and if necessary
I making the Queen's English accessory
to my offence



Guyana 1949 emigrated to Britain 1977.



“The effect of mass migrations has been the creation of radically new types of human being: people who root themselves in **ideas** rather than places, in **memories** as much as in material things; people who have been obliged to **define themselves** – because they are so defined by others – by their otherness; people in whose deepest selves **strange fusions** occur, unprecedented unions between what they were and where they find themselves. The migrant **suspects reality**: having experienced several ways of being, he understands their illusory nature. **To see things plainly, you have to cross a frontier.**” (Rushdie 1991, 124-125).



Radical Alterity

Jean Baudrillard & Marc Guillaume
(1994; 2008)

What is alterity? Why do we need it?

- Fascination for Other countries → hopes and anxieties of our civilization
- What do we care about the Other?
- Reality of the Other → 1. colonization and cultural assimilation → exoticism ; scarcity of alterity
- 2. Alterity is *constructed* more than it is discovered; a *fiction of the Other*
 - - “combinatory fictions”: something constructed from a certain reality and then given a dose of imagination and fiction.
 - - “in-between position”
- “ALTERITY is the Other way of thinking by refusing to think in terms of finiteness.” Frontiers can be totally imaginary and invisible
- “reality” and “game” → law and rule

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