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FORMATION DOCTORALE EN ARTS,
LANGUES ET LITTERATURES

UNITE DE RECHERCHE ET DE
FORMATION DOCTORALE EN
LANGUES ET LITTERATURES

**IDENTITY AND BELONGING IN BLACK BRITISH
DRAMA : A READING OF KWAME KWEI-ARMAH'S
ELIMINA'S KITCHEN AND FIX UP**

A Thesis submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requierements for the Award of a Master's
in English

SPECIALISATION : BRITISH LITERATURE

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DEDICATION

To

my mentor, Late Professor John Nkemngong Nkengasong

who did not relent his effort to ensure that

my academic career is a success

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ABSTRACT

This study entitled *Identity and Belonging in Black British Drama: A Reading of Kwame Kwei-Armah's Elmina's Kitchen and Fix Up*, critically looks at the theme of identity and belonging, racism, oppression and culture in multicultural Britain. It discusses the dilemma and injustice in which Black Britons find themselves. The fact that they are called Black Britons but are not culturally integrated in Britain has been a call for concern. The work also points out issues surrounding Black British identity with regard to multiculturalism. The study is examined from two theoretical stand points: namely New Historicism and Cultural Study. New Historicism attempts to trace the history, the ethnic inheritance and the identity formation of Black Britons. Cultural Study examines the cultural landscape of Britain and its influence on cultural identity formation of Black Britons in contemporary Britain. The study advocates for respect and representation of Black cultural identity in Britain. Compromising Black cultural identity for popular culture has come with complacency in which Black identity remains a question of "who am I?" in Britain. Therefore getting the Black cultural identity represented would mean accepting and merging Blacks in Britain without any form of rejection and marginalization. It is important to note that the ultimate goal to get identity issues sorted out is for Britain to celebrate difference in a contemporary multi-racial and multi-cultural Britain.

RÉSUMÉ

Cette étude, intitulée *Identity and Belonging in Black British Drama: A Reading of Kwame Kwei Armah's Elmina's Kitchen and Fix Up*, examine d'un œil critique le thème de l'identité et de l'appartenance, du racisme, de l'oppression et de la culture dans la Grande-Bretagne multiculturelle. Elle traite du dilemme et de l'injustice auxquels les Bretons noirs font face. Le fait qu'ils soient considérés comme des Bretons noirs sans être intégrés en Grande-Bretagne sur le plan culturel a suscité des inquiétudes. Cette recherche souligne également les enjeux liés à l'identité noire britannique en ce qui concerne l'intégration multiculturelle. Elle est donc menée sur le fondement de deux grilles d'analyse, à savoir le nouvel historicisme et les études culturelles. Le nouvel historicisme tente de retracer l'histoire, l'héritage ethnique et la formation identitaire des Bretons noirs tandis que les études culturelles passent en revue le paysage culturel de la Grande-Bretagne et son influence sur la formation de l'identité culturelle des Bretons noirs dans la Grande-Bretagne contemporaine. La présente étude préconise le respect et la représentation de l'identité culturelle noire en Grande-Bretagne. La mise en péril de cette identité culturelle noire au profit de la culture populaire s'est faite avec une assurance excessive dans laquelle l'identité noire demeure une question de « qui suis-je ? » en Grande-Bretagne. Par conséquent, faire représenter l'identité culturelle noire aurait le sens d'admettre et d'unir les Noirs en Grande-Bretagne sans aucune forme de rejet et de marginalisation. Enfin, il convient de relever que la résolution des problèmes d'identité vise essentiellement à permettre de célébrer la différence dans une Grande-Bretagne contemporaine multiraciale et multiculturelle.

Mots clés: identité, appartenance, drame britannique noir

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

British literature is literature from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands. We cannot talk of British literature without making mention of pioneer writers like Geoffrey Chaucer, Charles Dickens, William Shakespeare, William Wordsworth and many other writers whose works have classically influenced English Literature. They are origins and indigenes of Britain whom critics have canonized as British writers. These writers for so long have held the monopoly of what is termed British Literature. That notwithstanding, the impact of European conquest on the formerly colonized territories in particular have changed the conception of British Literature. Unlike before, contemporary Britain is endowed with multiple cultures because it is a multi-racial community. In order to truly understand contemporary British Literature, especially in its incorporation of post-colonial themes, it is important to consider its diversity in race, culture, language and identity. Britain as an imperialist, championed colonialism, slavery, and slave trade which has drastically affected the British society politically, economically, culturally, and literally. Looking at racial diversity, there is the black race against the white race and mixed race.

The term “Black” historically has had a number of appellations as a racial and political label and may be used in wide socio-political contexts to encompass a broader range of non-European ethnic minority population in Britain. This has become a controversial definition. “Black British” is one of the various self-designation entries used in the UK ethnicity classification. Originally, Black people had their own unique culture and tradition. Later, they were enslaved and were socially and economically oppressed, and displaced. They were moved to Europe and America as slaves. Even after their freedom, they still suffered discrimination and inequality; and as a result Black identity became questionable.

Stuart Hall in his school of thought called “British Cultural Studies” has succinctly outlined ways in which cultural identity can be classified. There are at least two different ways of thinking about cultural identity. The first position defines cultural identity in terms of one shared culture, a sort of collective, “one true self hiding inside the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed selves which people with a shared history and ancestry shared in common. Within the term of this definition, our common identities reflect the common

historical experiences and shared cultural code which binds us as one people, with stable unchanging and continuous reference and meaning, beneath the shifting divisions and vicissitudes of our actual history (223).

This oneness underlying all the other, more superficial differences is the truth, the essence of Caribbean, of the black experience. It is this identity which a Caribbean or Black Diaspora must discover, excavate, bring to light and express through cinematic representation (Hall, p.223)

Being Black in Britain is being racialized, a process of consciousness in which colour become a defining factor of who you are. Therefore to understand Black British identity represents a significant provocation to our understanding of a persistent inequality amongst different races in Britain, arousing important questions on the relationship between identity, culture and race. It is worth noting that individuals may sometimes face problems or obstacles that may prevent the development of a strong identity. This sort of unresolved crisis may leave the individuals struggling to know who they are. They often seem to have no idea of who or what they are, where they belong or where they want to go. They may withdraw from normal life, not taking action or actually acting as they usually would at work, in their marriages or at school. They may be unable to make defining choices about the future. They may even tend to negative things such as crimes and drugs. They may think having a negative identity is better than having none at all. This is a glaring situation *in Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix Up* by Kwame Kwei-Armah. Other playwright such as Bola Abaje, Roy Williams, and Debbie Tucker Green, Lynotte Goddard, Dr Osborne and Kwei-Armah have addressed the issue of tracing and representing Black British Identity in England.

As a conglomeration of different people, of multiple races from different social, economic, religious and political backgrounds, Britain makes up what is referred to as multicultural Britain. Post-colonial writers such as Armah are disgruntled with the approach in which this multicultural Britain has administered and represented the Black race. In an interview, Kwei-Armah expressed regret over discrimination that existed between the white and black people and the way the black people are treated and misrepresented in the 21st century. Born a Black British in Hillingdon London, he is disgruntled by his childhood treatment as a less privileged citizen in Britain because he is black, he questions his identity in particular and Black identity in general. It is therefore important to question why there is a persistent misrepresentation and racial discrimination of Blacks in a multicultural Britain; a

society that is supposed to exhibit respect and cultural integration of different races which make up the contemporary British society.

In an attempt to get Blacks represented in Britain, Kwei-Armah staged plays which include *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix Up*. In these plays, the life of Black people in Britain is presented. He paints the picture of the life of Black people in the face of multicultural Britain. This life is reflected in the works of W.E.B Du Bois in the first chapter of *The Soul of Black Folk*, where Du Bois writes:

The history of American Negro is the history of this strife, - this longing to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double self into a better and true self in the male gene, he wishes neither of the older selves to be lost. He could not Africanize America for America has too much to teach the world and Africa. He cannot bleach his Negro soul in a flute of white Americans, for he knows that Negro blood has a message for the world. He simply wishes to make it possible for a man to be both a Negro and American without being cursed and spit upon by his fellows, without having doors of opportunity closed roughly in his face. (Du Bois, p. 5)

This write-up examines the construction of Black British identity in the same manner as Kwei-Armah captures it in *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix Up*. Identity as a concept in this work is examined in relation to how it is interwoven by the future of an individual, group of people, race, language, history behaviour and social involvement. Stuart Hall in his essay "Cultural Identity and Diaspora" highlights how the formation of identity is engulfed by the dialectics of the past historical experience and upcoming occurrences to search for an acceptable and a legal identity. This has brought about questions from Black British citizens such as: who am I? What am I? Where do I come from? Where am i heading to?

Research Problem

Black British people originally had their own culture and custom whose roots were traced to Africa. To convey their sense of self as Black British people, they must therefore generate a positive understanding of their long cultural tradition which has fashioned their ways of life in Britain. The unique feature of their culture is that their roots and base is Africa. To acknowledge its origin is to identify the unchanging seam which is common to all Black people in the diaspora in general and in Britain in particular. Unfortunately, Kwame Kwei-Armah in his plays depicts a situation where Blacks in Britain are persistently misrepresented. He decries racial discrimination, misrepresentation, marginalisation, oppression and suppression of Black British identity and belonging in Britain.

Despite the fact that London comprises of people from different cultural backgrounds, histories and ethnic groups, black people finds it difficult to identify themselves and to get themselves represented in this society. In the play *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix Up*, characters face obstacles that prevent the development of a strong identity. This sort of unresolved crisis leaves the individual in a struggle to identify themselves; they often seem to have no idea who or what they are, where they belong and where they intend to go. They usually withdraw from normal life and do not act like they would normally act at work, in their marriages, in school, in the society, and in their business. Consequently they might be unable to make defining choices in future. They usually turn to negative things such as crime and drugs. They would think having a negative identity is better than having none at all. This is applicable in most of the characters in *Elmina's kitchen* and *Fix Up*. Ashley is an exemplary character in the play. He is a Black British youth who has resorted to violence (crime and drugs) because he failed to develop a strong identity.

Research Questions

The questions here are; how relevant are the opinions of other writers to identity and belonging in Kwei-Armah's texts under study? Why are Black Britons considered "neither-nor" in Britain? Can the celebration of difference in culture and race enhance identity and belonging in Britain? Can they be recognized and fully accepted into the British society through this culture? What is Kwei-Armah's vision? It is important to know that most of Kwi-Armah's characters are frustrated because they are discriminated upon, as a result they do not have a true identity. Armah's authorial vision makes it clear that in the 21st Century, every multiracial and multicultural society should celebrate difference for peaceful coexistence without any race and culture looking down on another.

Research Objectives

This study sets out to examine the question of identity and belonging in Black British Drama. It focuses on Kwame Kwei-Armah's *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix Up*. It illustrates how in multicultural and multi-racial society like Britain, immigrants face persistent misrepresentation and racial discrimination. To illustrate how Black British identity has been hindered, the work examines the history and cultural landscape of Black Britons in relation to identity formation and belonging in Britain. It discusses the cultural hegemony and backdrop of multicultural Britain and how it affected the Black race in the texts under study.

It is worthy of note that the complexity of Black British identity is as a result of racial discrimination, misrepresentation and cultural hegemony which have influenced the development of Black British identity, therefore the goal is to get Britain to recognise and valorise all races and cultures. This will go a long way to solve identity and belonging issues in Britain. In order to get the Black race and culture represented, Kwei-Armah staged these plays; *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix Up* in which through his characters, he proposes the recognition, representation and integration of the different cultures that make up the British society of today. To achieve this aim, the study's main objective is to analyse and discuss issues of race, culture, identity and belonging in a contemporary British Society as presented in Kwei-Armah's *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix Up*.

Research hypothesis

This work is based on the hypothesis that Black Britons and their struggle for identity and belonging in Britain as depicted in Kwei-Armah's *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix Up* has remained mute and relegated to the background in relation to the mainstream British multicultural representation which Blacks have played a great role in building the British Empire since European colonisation. In a cosmopolitan community like Britain, self-recognition and representation comes first. It has not been the case with Blacks living in Britain. They are left with no choice than to fake identities of the White Britons so as to get themselves integrated. The energy and force they have put in place in building a multicultural Britain is the reason why Britain should welcome and celebrate difference in culture and race. Britain should cease from the adage of mainstream cultural domination and should embrace multicultural integration and representation. This would enable Blacks in Britain to live according to their indigeneous culture rather than fake mannerism, accent, dressing, eating habits in a vain attempt to become British people. Representing Blacks in Britain entails accepting, respecting and integrating their culture within the British Society without any form of discrimination as people of the Black race.

Significance of the study

Black British identity problem is a call for concern from researchers and scholars. They are concerned with creating an identity that will legally represent Blacks living in Britain. The study gives room for us to make an analysis of identity and belonging in multicultural Britain. The study examines the different cultural varieties in contemporary Britain as presented in the plays under study. The study also examines the various ways through which identity and belonging is manifested in a highly multicultural Britain with particular reference to Black

British Drama. By examining the complex nature of identity and belonging in Black British Drama, the study reasserts the value of every culture to it and reinforces Kwei-Armah's idea that every people in every multicultural community should uphold their cultural values because of the relevance of culture to the people. It is worth noting that Kwei-Armah's works fall under the category of Black British Drama which paves the way for further investigation.

Definition of key terms

It is important to define some key words to facilitate the understanding of the words in context. These words are: Identity, belonging, Black British drama.

The *Cambridge Dictionary* defines "Identity" as the feeling of being certain about whom or what you are. Erik Erikson, a German psychologist defines the term identity as the qualities, beliefs, personality, looks and or expression that make up a person (self-identity as emphasized in psychology) and (collective identity (group) as pre-eminent in sociology), in this case identity can be regarded as positive or as destructive. This is the case in *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix Up* where characters such as Digger, Ashley and Kwesi create an identity in response to racism, marginalisation and oppression that goes on around them. Their comprehensive approach to the society in which they find themselves is the reason why they see themselves as neither-nor thus have to forge an identity of crime and violence.

According to Peter Wemreich, a person's identity is defined as the totality of personal construal in which one comprehend his or her present, expresses the continuity between how one comprehends his past and how one perceive how he aspires to be in the future. This allows for definitions of identity such as "one's ethnic identity which is defined as that part of the totality of personal-construal made up of those dimensions that express the continuity between one's construal of future aspiration in relation to ethnicity"

From the definition of the two terminologies by Erik Erikson and Peter Wemreich, it is important to state clearly that identity is related to ethnicity which is constructed by the past experiences that relates the future. Identity becomes a crisis if an individual or a group of people finds it uncertain to construct this identity. This is the case in *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix Up* as is presented by Kwei-Amah, he staged plays in which Black Britons are uncertain about their identity. They find themselves in a state of confusion in which they want to act like white people but their skin colour does not give them the opportunity, they want to belong but they see themselves as "neither nor", they are neither Africans nor British, they are caught up in a web of "dilemma".

James Marcia has expanded on Erikson's initial theory. According to Marcia and his colleagues in "Identity Diffusion", the balancing identity and confusion lies in making a commitment to an identity. Marcia also developed an interview method to measure identity as well as four different identity statuses. This method looks at three different areas of functioning; occupational role, belief values, and sexuality. In Erikson's stages of psychosocial development, the emergence of an identity crisis occurs during the teenage years in which people struggle with feelings of identity versus role confusion. In today rapidly changing world, identity crises are more common than in Erikson's period. These conflicts are certainly not confined to the teenage years. People tend to experience them at various points throughout life, particularly at points of great change including migration, traumatic event as the case of Black British identity crisis. It can be traced back to historical events such as the influence of slavery, slave trade and migration. The main focus being cultural identity and belonging. It is important to relate it to ethnicity so as to better deal with Cultural identity in a multi-cultural society like Britain.

The *Cambridge Dictionary* defines "Belonging" as the feeling of being happy or comfortable as part of a particular group and having a good relationship with the other members of a group because they welcome you and accept you. From the definition, it is seen that Black Britons in *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix up* are not happy and comfortable in Britain due to poor relationship that exist between them. White Britons do not welcome nor accept them as members of the British society so they turn out to question their identity. Belonging should be analyzed both as a personal, intimate feeling of being "at home" in a place (place-belongingness) and as a discursive resource that constructs, claims, justifies, or resists forms of socio-spatial inclusion or exclusion in the politics of belonging.

Identity and belonging according to Aistear in *The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* is about children developing a positive sense of who they are, and the feeling that they are valued and respected as part of the family and community. This is questionable in Britain in the case of second and third generation Black Britons. Even though they are born and bred in Britain, they fail to develop a positive sense and the feeling that they are valued and respected in Britain. For our second concept we can turn to belonging, in much recent writing, toward using this term rather than that of identity. This may be because it moves away from the individual as a unitary subject or because it is better able to grasp the multiple elements that individuals use to make their claims and that are reflective of their affective lives. It is important

to note in this context that “belonging” too can be used in a unitary way and is not necessarily freer of those essentializing and totalizing concerns found in identity

Belonging can be about attributions, those you are designated by others formally or informally, some of which might not tally with your lived experiences (such as particular attributions about being a Muslim, a Jew, a black person, a woman, or a Romani person that misrecognize you). It is not possible to argue that shared values are a prerequisite to belonging. Neither are they a necessary or sufficient condition. There are shared values of different kinds. One can share with others values of democratization or gender equality while neither identifying with them, having access to membership in their “club,” nor indeed having affective links with them. On the other hand, one can be accepted as a member and therefore as belonging while having very different political or cultural values: how and the extent to which shared values count in the yielding of belonging is contextual and situational. To share values might take us some way in the direction of belonging but other aspects need to be in place also to yield belonging, either in the formal juridical sense or in the more informal sense, as well as the affective sense. Blacks and white may not have shared values but born in the same society, they should be ready to share difference as the main objective of this research work.

Belonging is a concept that can be used at different levels (as has been suggested for identity). Belonging as an analytical term can enable us to ask questions about belonging to “what” rather than, as with identity, who an individual “is” or who and what they “identify with” (which are in fact two different questions). Certainly, the use of identification may be entailed in the notion of belonging as well as in the notion of identity. But more than identification, belonging actually entails not only issues about attributions and claims (as does identity) but also allows clearly questions about the actual spaces and places to which people are accepted as members or feel that they are members, and broader questions about social inclusion as well as forms of violence and subordination entailed in processes of boundary making.

“Black British drama” is that which is united by the experiences of post-colonial travels, alienation, discrimination and an attachment to Britain. In contemporary Britain, Black British drama is used to describe actings of Black British writers who have African or Caribbean decent. In Deirdre Osborne’s *Staging Belonging and Unbelonging in Black British Drama Today* he states that:

For Black Artists in Britain, the divisions engendered by racial politics have produced long standing contortions of positive status and identity and a legacy of disenfranchisement, which is hardly favourable to creativity or progress. Until the late twentieth century, Black people in Britain, served as a representational presence rather than experiencing opportunities for authentic creative agency in white-dominated cultural arenas [...] (Osborne, p. 203- 204).

Here, Osborne stressed the fact that Black British drama which satirises racism and misrepresentation has created long standing effects on Black British identity and belonging. Eventhough Black dramatists have contributed to contemporary British multiculturalism, Black British culture is dominated by white culture thus cultural hegemony. Drama in particular literally brings to life, and theatricalizes debates about Black people's social, cultural and national sense of belonging in a white majority context. Its live dimension directly confronts ideologically entrenched antipathies and socially enacted xenographies producing performative of Black cultural identity. Michael Eldridge in *The rise and fall of Black Britian* has referred to Frantz Fanon's claim that nations have "a fundamentally recitative or performative quality to them" and applied this to cultural conceptions of blackness in Britain. Eldridge concludes that "Black Britain was performed into being deliberately conjured by artists and intellectuals" (74) which implies that a conscious aesthetic process has been crucial in rendering this distinctive British manifestation of African diasporic inheritance as is the case in Kwei-Armah's *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix UP*.

According to laden Benedict's article "Black British literature", Black British literature became current in the 1920s. The term was first used to refer to the literature of those authors based in Britain but whose roots were in former British Colonies of Asia, Africa and the Caribbean. Laden further contents that the term at that time was not a purely racial label; it was rather politically motivated. This literature gave birth to Black British drama. Black British drama was then a drama united by the experience of post-colonial travels, alienation, discrimination and an attachment to Britain. Today, Black British drama is used to describe actings of these British writers who have African or Caribbean decent (Laden 16).

Black British people are British Citizens of either African descent or of Black African-Caribbean background. The term Black British developed in the 1950 referring to the Black British West Indian people from the former Caribbean British colonies in the West Indies now referred to as the wind rush Generation and people from Africa who are residents of the United Kingdom and are British. *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix Up* are written by Black British playwright Kwame Kwei-Armah to analyze and give contributions on how to find solutions to Black

British Identity and belonging issue in a multicultural Britain. Therefore, Britain should reconsider celebrating difference in a contemporary multicultural Britain.

Imperatively, this Black British writer Kwame Kwei-Armah has focused his plays on the characters uncertainty in their feelings, uncertainty about themselves, their culture, their origin, attitudes and their goals. The playwright has used characters from diverse backgrounds to convey the meaning of web in between foreign culture and one's native culture to get an identity as a Black in Britain.

Structure of the Work

This study is made up of a general introduction, five chapters and a conclusion. The general introduction comprises of the research problem, the research questions, the research objectives, and the research hypothesis, significance of the study, definition of key terms and structure of the work.

Chapter one is titled Theoretical Frameworks and Review of related Literature. The chapter discusses the Theoretical Frameworks. It highlights the relevance of cultural studies with regard to New Historicism as the supporting theoretical paradigm for the analysis and interpretation of identity issues in Kwei-Armah's drama texts. It also dwells on the review of Related Literature. It focuses on the different opinions expressed by different critics on Kwei-Armah's works.

Chapter two discusses "Historicity and Black British Identity". It attempts to trace Black British identity in relation to its social and political history, taking cognisance of the fact that they have moved from one cultural heritage to another before settling down as Black British people. It also points out the different elements that identify Black British people.

In chapter three, discussions "on the complexity of Black British Identity" lead to an illustration of the politics of race and belonging. Characters in the texts under study are portrayed as people who do not know where they belong; they are neither Africans nor British people. The chapter further discusses the vibrancy of the Black Culture and the challenges it faces at the cross-cultural level.

Chapter four examines "Cultural Hegemony and Multicultural Integration". It attempts to explain that British Cultural conservatism which imposes cultural hegemony on alien cultures renders multicultural integration in Britain, especially Black British Culture difficult. The chapter scrutinises the various factors that propagate British cultural hegemony including

cultural conservatism and the challenges it imposes on multicultural integration. Focus here is on cultural integration denouncing cultural domination and racism by white British over the years.

Chapter five is entitled “Kwei-Amah’s dramatic vision”. The chapter reveals how Kwei-Armah decries racism in a context where cultures are respected irrespective of race. White race has dominated, suppressed, marginalized and also differentiated them against the black race. In his dramatic vision, he wants the world to know that all cultures should be respected and represented irrespective of race. He also calls out Black Britons to focus on education in order to make themselves renowned rather than engaging in crimes and violence as the way forward. To him education is the best tool for empowerment, respect and representation.

The study ends with a general conclusion. This conclusion summarise the chapters and states the results of the research endeavour.

CHAPTER ONE
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
AND
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter on the one hand is a presentation of the theoretical frameworks selected for the analysis of Kwei-Armah's *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix Up*. These frameworks include Cultural Studies and New Historicism. Cultural Studies is used alongside New Historicism because they are relevant in the interpretation of these texts under study. These critical frames share common characteristics such as history, culture, identity, and race. These theories enable us to evaluate Black British history through literature and literature through its cultural context. The chapter highlights the relevance of these theories to the study. It further highlights specific tenets of the respective theories applied in the analysis of the texts. The chapter also reviews the critical opinions in existing literature on Kwame Kwei-Armah's works in general and *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix Up* specifically with regard to identity and belonging in Black British drama. This chapter further attempts to relate the texts under study to a contemporary Britain in which culture shapes and determines peoples' identity as well as influences people's historical experiences.

The two plays are embedded with diverse approaches towards identifying one's cultural heritage. It is worth noting that in the analysis of the text *Fix Up*, Kwei-Armah's approach to identification and belonging is about knowing the history and culture of Black British people. On the other hand, in *Elmina's Kitchen*, the playwright showcases the African culture of decency as manifested in the protagonist character, at the same time brings out the Afro Caribbean life of violence and crime. To the Black Britons they are involved in crime and violence because of environmental influence. It also acts as a medium through which they enrich themselves in order to climb up the social ladder. This would give them a sense of belonging in a multicultural British society. The theories used in the study have overlapping tenets which include: cultural hegemony, identity and belonging, ethnicity, multiculturalism, acculturation, racism, history, colonial education, violence and crime. The essence of using

these theories is the fact that they are both important critical tools, fulfilling separate yet contemporary needs. Since Britain is a multicultural society, it is very important to use Cultural Studies as a critical tool to analyse Black culture and lifestyle. The study summons the application of cultural study because one of the prominent settings in both plays under study is Britain which is a multicultural society. Culture is said to identify and represent people, and also help them to belong to the society. Identity which is a major tenet of Cultural Studies brings out culture, enhances multiculturalism and cultural coexistence; it shares many characteristics with the historicity of Black British people in Britain, their history before the colonial era, their identity in contemporary British society as it is the case in the texts under study. The integration of the author's biography in the analysis of the work also helps to clarify the life of Black Britons living in Britain, and who have been victims of colonial conquest and whose identity and belonging are still highly questionable in a culturally dominated society as Britain.

Theoretical Framework

Cultural studies are an important critical tool in literary interpretation especially when interpreting texts that have to do with multicultural society such as contemporary Britain. John Storey states that the origin of cultural studies lies in two books published in the 1950s, which one is the "*The Uses of Literacy*" by Richard Hoggart and the other is '*Culture and Society*' by Raymond Williams. By this, John Storey situates the time in which Cultural Studies emerged and how influential this has been to cultural integration. For the fact that the world is fast becoming a global village, many people from different cultural backgrounds came in contact with others thus new problems emerge as postulated by James Procter.

James procter's *Routledge Critical Thinker's series Stuart Hall* postulates that:

[...] new problems have emerged. The ideas and issues behind these radical changes in humanities are often presented without reference to wider contexts or as theories which you can simply "add on " to the texts you read. Certainly, there is nothing wrong with picking out a selected ideas or using what comes to hand-indeed, some thinkers have argued that this, is in fact, all we can do (Procter VII)

From the above quotation, it is necessary to use theories or critical tools in analysing literary texts in this postmodern world in which new problems have emerged as quoted above for a better understanding of the issues and themes raised in *Elmina's kitchen* and *Fix Up*, a theoretical framework is required in the context of this study. Cultural studies are now an

international, cross disciplinary approach to studying cultures and their effects. This implies that discussion of cultural studies in this work will regularly reference Hall and the Birmingham school in general.

Cultural studies is an approach to studying culture that lies at the intersection between the social science, notably sociology and the humanities, especially literature. As a non-disciplinary study, cultural studies draw from diverse fields and academic tradition. Talking about the intellectual tools of cultural studies, Stuart Hall listed such diverse sources as Marx, Weber, Howard Becker, Raymond Williams, E.P Thomson, Roland Barthes, George Luvacs, Louis Althusser, and Michel Foucault. Due to this kind of Background, cultural study has often been referred to as non-discipline.

Stuart Hall in a lecture at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign on cultural studies states that:

Culture does not consist of what the educated elites happen to fancy, such as classical music or the fine art; it is simply experience lived, experience interpreted, experience defined “And it can tell us things about the world, he believed, that more traditional studies of politics or economics alone could not. (Hall, 1983)

From the above quotation, one of the major concerns of cultural studies is Identity and Belonging. How do we get ourselves identified? We can do this by our culture, this is seen in our experiences. This takes us back to one of the definitions of culture which has to do with the ways of life of an individual or a group of people. What are these ways of life? They are all about our actions, our experiences, our perceptions. It is obvious to state that Black British people in *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix UP* identify themselves with the culture which makes up the Black British race. This culture which defines them is their “experiences”, what they lived. Identity which is the major tenet of cultural studies can be effectively implemented if Black culture is respected and represented in Britain as people of dual heritage. This will give them the opportunity to participate in political, economic and socio cultural activities in Britain thus will create in them a sense of belonging. Tenets of cultural studies include identity, representation, multiculturalism, cultural hegemony, imaginative rediscovery and colonialism. These tenets enhance the understanding of the role of culture in identity formation of a person or group of people. For us to better identify ourselves, it is good to go by our culture because our culture determines our identity, celebrating our culture means belonging to the

society in which we live. The above tenets are relevant to this study as would be seen in the subsequent paragraphs.

Exposing the control of representation is one of the chief concerns of Stuart Hall and Cultural Studies. To get the Blacks represented in Britain is what Kwei-Armah advocates in his two plays under study. Being a Black British, the playwright has gone through a number of challenges, one of which is identity and belonging to the British society. In order for most of his compatriots to belong, they resort to different forms of both legal and illegal activities. It is therefore imperative to state that in a multicultural society like Britain, different racial and ethnic groups with a variety of cultures should be represented so as to give them an identity and a sense of belonging in such a multicultural society.

Furthermore, cultural hegemony is fast practiced in Britain which has become a thorn to Black British cultural manifestation. Black British culture is unpopular and considered inferior and primitive due to white cultural domination in Britain.

At that Stuart Hall delivers a lecture on cultural studies:

Many academics still consider the serious study of popular culture beneath them; a much starker division existed, then between what Hall termed the «authenticated validated” taste of the upper classes and the unrefined culture of the masses. Hall did not regard this hierarchy as useful.”(Hall, 1983)

With reference to Stuart Hall’s views on cultural studies, cultural hegemony is one of the most relevant tenets of cultural studies. It is also very significant in interpreting Kwei-Armah’s plays under study. The study of culture involves exposing the relationship of power that exist within a society at any given moment in order to consider how marginal or subordinate groups might secure or win temporally cultural space from dominant group. This idea is also shared by Tim O’Sulhvan et al in their book, *Key Concepts in Communication and Cultural Studies* when they content that “Cultural studies have developed a body of work which attempts to recover and place the cultures of hither to neglected groups”. This is evident in Kwei-Armah’s plays under study. In his authorial vision, Armah opted for a British society in which both Black and white cultures are represented unlike what is practice by the dominant white culture over subjugated black culture. Britain is a multicultural society with people from different cultural backgrounds therefore, a “Salad Bowl theory” best describes a contemporary British society in which all what is found in a Salad bowl is significant and plays a role in the production of Salad. Thus, all cultures that build up a diverse British society should be taken

into consideration, represented and given equal opportunities to excel. This explains why Armah's Plays are concerned with Cultural identity and Belonging, Blacks do not see themselves as inferior people under the white Britons. Digger for instance affirms his identity as Black, the absolutely deny to copy the white ways, believes in himself as Black and mocks at those fellow Black people like Deli who are doing everything to look like white Britons in order to gain an identity.

Stuart Hall in his book *Cultural Identity and the Diaspora* write that:

There are at least two different ways of thinking about cultural identity. The first position defines cultural identity in terms of one shared culture, a sort of collective "One time Self" hiding inside the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed "self", which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common. Within the terms of this definition, our cultural identity reflects common historical experience and shared Cultural code. It is this identity which a Caribbean or Black diaspora must discover, excavate, bring to light and express through cinematic representation. (Hall, p. 223)

From the above conception of cultural identity, Hall's concept played a critical role in all post-colonial struggles which have so profoundly reshaped our world. It lays at the center of the vision of playwrights such as Kwame Kwei-Armah and of pan-African political projects early in the century. It continues to be a very powerful and creative force in emergent forms of representation amongst hitherto marginalized people. In post-colonial societies, the rediscovery of this identity is often the object of what Frantz Fanon once called and he quotes

[...] a Passionate research... directed by the secret hope of discovering beyond the misery of today, beyond self-contempt, resignation and abjuration, some very beautiful and splendid era whose existence rehabilitated us both in regards to ourselves and in regards to other (Hall, p. 223)

From the above quotation, imaginative rediscovery goes beyond the misery of today. New forms of cultural practice in these societies address themselves to this project for the very good reason that, as Fanon put it, in the recent past, Colonization is not satisfied with holding a people in this grip and empty the native's brain of all form and content. By a kind of perverted logic, it turns the past of oppressed people and distorts, disfigures and destroys it. The question which fanon observation poses is; "what is the nature of this profound research which drives the new forms of visual and Cinematic representation"? "Is it only a matter of unearthing that which the colonial experience buried and over laid bringing to light the hidden continuities it

suppressed”? Or it is quite different practice entailed-not the rediscovery but the production of identity. Not an identity grounded in the archaeology but in the re-telling of the past.

We should not, for a moment underestimate or neglect the importance of the act of imaginative rediscovery in which this conception of a rediscovered, essential identity entails. Hidden histories have played a critical role in the emergence of many of the most important social movement of our time such as Feminist, anti-colonial, anti-racist. The photographic works of a generation of Jamaican and Rastafarian artist or of visual artist like Armet Francis (a Jamaican born photographer who has lived in Britain since the age of eight) is a testimony to the continually creative power of this conception of identity with the emerging practice of the people of “The Black Triangle”, taking in Africa, the Caribbean, the USA and the UK attempt to reconstruct in visual terms the underlying unity of the Black people whom colonization and slavery distributed across the African diaspora. This text is an act of imaginary reunification.

Crucially, such images offer a way of imposing an imaginary coherence on the experience of dispersal and fragmentation, which is the history of all enforced diaspora. They do this by representing or figuring Africa as the mother of these different civilizations. This Triangle is after all “centered” in Africa. Africa is the name of the missing term, the ‘great aporia’, which lies at the center of our cultural identity and gives it a meaning which, until recently, it lacked. No one who looks at these textual images, now, in the light of the history of transportation, slavery, and migration can fail to understand now the rift of separation, the loss of identity which has been integral to the Caribbean experience only begins to be healed when these forgotten connections are once more set in place. Such text restore an imaginary fullness or plenitude, to set against the broken rubric of our past, they are resource of resistance and identity with which to confront the fragmented and pathological ways in which that experience has been reconstructed within the dominant regimes of cinematic and visual representation of the west.

Kwame Kwei-Armah through cinematic and visual representation, reveals that, contemporary multicultural Britain is yet on the broken rubric of the past, this can be substantiated in the character of Digger in which his ways of life (that is his culture) is reflected in his past experiences as a slave who has learnt the hard ways in life, and whose survival is by the grace of God. Finding it difficult to get through in life, he traced his origin as a Black in

order to be identified but sees his fellow Black Brothers in Britain as “British Black” because they attempted to copy the white ways of life in order to get themselves identified.

There is however a second related but different view of cultural identity. This second position recognizes that as long as there are many critical points of similarity, there are also critical points of deep and significant difference which constitute what we really are, or rather since history has intervened “what we have become” we cannot speak for very long, with any exactness about one experience on identity without acknowledging its other side. The ruptures and discontinuous which constitute precisely the Caribbean uniqueness. Cultural identity in this second sense is a matter of “becoming” as well as “being”. It belongs to the future as well as to the past. It is not something that already exist transcending place, time, history culture. Identity come from somewhere, have histories but, like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation far from being eternally fixed in some essentially past, they are subject to the continuous play of history, culture and power. Far from being grounded in a mere recovery of the past, which is waiting to be found, and which when found, will secure our sense of ourselves into eternity, identities are names we give to different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within the narrative of the past.

It is only from this second position that we can properly understand the traumatic character of the colonial experience. The ways in which black people, black experiences, were positioned and subjected to the dominant regimes of representation were the effects of a critical exercise of cultural power and normalization. Not only, in Said’s “orientalist” sense, were we constructed as different and other within the categories of knowledge of the power to make us see and experience ourselves as “other” every regime of dialectic relationship between two axes. That one gives us some grounding in same continuity with the past. The second reminds us that what we share is precisely the experience of a profound discontinuity: the people dragged into slavery, transportation, colonization, migration came predominantly from Africa.

In Stuart Hall’s work, “*Cultural Studies and the Diaspora*”, he places identity crisis at the center of Cultural Studies. Identity crisis being a major tenet of cultural studies, it is of this reason that Black British play wrights such as Kwame Armah in an attempt to get the Black British identity represented in a strictly white dominant regime, he reiterates the origin of Black British people in his prologue to his play *Elmina’s kitchen*. He showcases the Black culture which identifies them. Even though they are called Afro Caribbean living in Britain, they are

still in the position to demonstrate through visual art the Black cultural heritage as presented below

A costume man in darkness standing absolutely still with a gurkel (A one string African guitar famed for possessing the power to draw off spirits) in his hands (Kwei-Armah, Act one, p.1)

The action of the man with a guitar shows a distasteful attitude in which he displays his head, depicting that there is a problem. The symbol of darkness in which the prologue is introduced is an image of a bleak state of Black British people in the face of Slavery, racism, and despair. Although they know where they come from, boasting of a real identity is a problem since they are not represented in the British society. In scene one of the play we find a detail description of Elmina's kitchen. Most of the adjectives are directed towards African-American cultural artefacts. The play presents and respects the black African traditional ways of life and the qualities this culture can present.

The play is physically set in Britain but psychologically set in Africa. This dual setting portrays dual identity. It becomes a call for concern because Blacks in Britain are from diverse backgrounds that make up a multicultural Britain but are not represented. Bringing in a dual setting by the author is not just to create a literary technique but to create awareness in the audience in which it will enable the Black Britons in particular and Blacks in general to always trace their roots and their culture. It helps to identify them as people of the same race and ethnic background.

Considering the fact that cultural studies are a vast study, the various tenets of cultural studies therefore play an important role in this study. The ideas and multicultural sensibilities of the playwright are in accordance with cultural study, while reading through the plays and giving it an analysis, attention has to be paid on trying to discover through this critical tool the deeper meaning of the plays under study. Tenets of cultural studies are many and varied. These tenets include culture, representation, history, articulation, language, post-colonial resistance and above all identity and belonging. Considering the fact that cultural studies entail a larger scope, these tenets mentioned above are substantiated in the plays under study. Although different critics express different critical opinions, cultural studies remain a vast field with numerous tenets

In order to better understand the link between cultural studies, race, identity and belonging, it is important to discuss the link between cultural studies and the concept of multiculturalism.

J.A Cuddon in *A Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* defines multiculturalism as:

A broad range of intellectual and political movement initiated by various ethnic and religious minorities, feminist and gays during the last two or three decades of the 20th Century .All of these were in their own way opposed to the American or European self-image of homogeneity as based allegedly on [...]. (Cuddon, p. 477)

From the above definition of multiculturalism, J.A Cuddon draws our attention on the importance of co-existence. Multiculturalism calls for the recognition, tolerance and representation of each and every culture in its uniqueness within a given multicultural society. Multiculturalism therefore is the belief that different cultures in any society should be given importance. It is true that every race has got a culture, considering the fact that every society is made up of people from different parts of the world with different racial backgrounds, in order to successfully amalgamate or merge these people together, these multiple races with multiple cultures have to be given equal importance in such a mixed society. Therefore, multiculturalism should create a conducive atmosphere for coexistence.

Paul Gilroy in *The Black Atlantic* postulates the double consciousness and cultural intermixture encountered by Blacks in Britain. He states that:

Blacks in the west stand between African culture which are seen as Black authentic cultubackground and western modernity. He argues that the culture of British Black citizens have been produced in a synchronic pattern which style and form represent the Caribbean continent, the united states and Africa (Gilroy, p. 1).

From the above quotation it is seen that Black Britons have been imbued with mixed cultures before they settled in Britain. The settlement of Blacks and hybridity of course constructed the contemporary British society before migration occurred.

Kwei-Armah's carefully balanced and well-crafted scripts describe an immensely disgusting unnerving situation in Britain. Although depressing in many respect it is not a total despair in *Elmina's kitchen*. Kwame Kwei-Armah skilfully weaves into the play much of what is rich about Black culture. In scene one, the singing of live music from Judeh Camera and Atongo Zimaband which is played before the play started, in which the performance is a concoction of African traditional music and American blues paints a picture of a multicultural life style of Blacks living in Britain.

According to Enzo Colombo in his article “Multiculturalism: An Overview of multicultural debates in western society”,

Multiculturalism refers to the situation in which people who hold different habits, customs, traditions, languages and or religious lives alongside each other in the same social space, willing to maintain relevant aspect of their own differences and to have it publicly recognized .usually the term involves positive evaluation of cultural diversity and the institutional commitment to its preservation.. (Colombo I)

From the above, Colombo postulates that multiculturalism hence is the act of bringing together different cultures, giving it a public recognition, evaluation, position and instituting it cultural diversity and communicate to it preservation. Armah in his plays denounces these unappreciated representation of black culture and history, he addresses a number of other concerns facing black culture in Britain, including the foregrounding of African American culture and history over that of Black Briton; the lack of acceptance in the black community of dual heritage, the hypocrisy of a black political movement not invested in the economic struggle of the black individual but instead in the capitalistic values of the surrounding white English society; and the absence of an intellectual black party amidst a black society more interested in current popular culture rather than its unacknowledged past. All are powerful topics rarely discussed on the British stage, especially on the venue with the prestige of the royal national theatre. Unfortunately, none of these provocative issues fully comes to fruition in the cottesloe production.

The fault does not lie with the social direction of Angus Jackson and the actor performance especially Jeffry Kisson as brother Kiyi, who subtly captures the sympathetic bookshop owner, and in one of the plays most powerful moment, conveys the survival mentality and heart break of Kiyi at seventy two as he cuts of his hair when all around him is lost. Equally, the stunning set by Bunny Christie conveys the cramped nature of Kiyi’s bookshop. Books full the set while the bookshelves themselves rise beyond the space of the proscenium arch and out of the audience sight, suggesting the grandness of ideas contained in the bookshop, while also reflecting the limited scope in which Black Britons struggle in the acquisition of knowledge.

From the above, it can be clearly stated that multiculturalism does not take into consideration Black life and Black culture in Britain. Black British culture is highly violated and not represented. Going by the play *Fix Up*, we are made to understand that Black culture has no place in Britain.

Will Kymlicka in *Multiculturalism: Success, Failure and the Future* share the same opinion. He observes that:

[...] multiculturalism is characterized as a feel good celebration of ethno-cultural diversity, encouraging citizen to acknowledge and embrace the panoply of customs, traditions music and cuisine that exist in a multi-ethnic society (Kymlicka, p. 14)

Kymlicka assumption enable us to understand that multiculturalism is not only limited to an atmosphere where by different cultures come together, but that what makes up a multicultural society are generally organized, accepted and also celebrated by the community in question. The citizens of such a society feel comfortable with the situation and share with each other's cultural experiences. Multiculturalism was created as a solution to accommodating immigrants who were arriving Britain especially those from the post war countries and new commonwealth immigrants. The policy basically allows immigrants to represent their nation rather than expecting them to adopt. These years meant a large transformation for Britain. Since then multiculturalism became an inseparable part of the political and social life of Britain.

In accordance with the above postulation, Armah's *Fix Up* clearly dramatizes the need for a multicultural society. In this play the protagonist, bro Kiyi keeps his hair as African (Rasta), Norma another character in the play keeps alien hair, though she is black British, she escapes from the realities of Black British life in order to get herself integrated but Brother Kiyi thinks his roots is African.

Brother Kiyi: undoes his lock and shakes them out. Norma looks at brother Kiyi's hair.

Norma: Boy, don't shake that thing at me. One sum ting. I don't like that Rasta thing you have on your head.

Brother Kiyi: And that alien hair you have on your head is better? It don't have nothing to with no Rasta. (Kwei-Armah, 2004, p.108)

The above dialogue stands to represent two different cultures, the African and West culture as represented by brother Kiyi and Norma respectively. Brother Kiyi will not change his life style to suit the Western ways. He would simply preserve the African ways rather than adopt the Western ways as is the case with Sister Norma. Here we can see the theme of escapism and reaffirmation. Blacks in Britain try hard to run away from foreign culture while in a quest for black cultural affirmation. They want to continue the culture inherited from their fore fathers as stated in the quotation below.

Dr. Lissa D. Belfield in her article Cultural Diversity sees culture as that which:

Shapes us, it shapes our identity and influence our behaviour. Culture is our way of being, more specifically, it refers to the shared language beliefs, values, norms, behaviours, and material objects that are passed down from one generation to the next. (Belfield, p. 1)

To bring together different cultures entails merging these shared values, languages, norms, beliefs, behaviour and material within a given society. Therefore, it is important for Britain to consider and respect these shared values in a diverse society as such so as to celebrate difference and give Blacks living in Britain a sense of belonging.

Closely related to the term multiculturalism is “Cultural Diversity” which is often used interchangeably with the concept of “multiculturalism”. As a cosmopolitan society, Britain has no choice but to welcome and merge different cultures which are in Britain due to the impacts of colonialism, displacement and migration. For Britain to understand the term it means she understands what has to be done when different groups come together.

Cultural Diversity is defined by St Anne’s-Belfield School as a system of beliefs and behaviours that recognizes and respects the presence of all diverse groups in an organization or society, acknowledges and values their socio-cultural difference, encourages and enables their continued contribution within an inclusive cultural context which empowers all within the organization or society.

It is very important to give an analysis of the plays under study so as to vividly point out what is expected from a multicultural British society and what is actually practice in such a diverse society. Armah in his plays, brings to mind a multicultural setting in Britain, bringing out the cultural values of Black Britons such as their dressing, eating habits, dances and beliefs yet not actually represented as is the case in *Fix Up* in which Norma will like cooking pig and cow trotters for her husband but thinks the white race sees it as food for slaves well as it is purely African.

A Sociologist Dr. Caleb Rosado in his article “Diversity and Multiculturalism” (11-15) described seven important actions involved in the definition of multiculturalism. These include the recognition of the abundant diversity of cultures, the respect for the difference, acknowledging the validity of different cultural expressions and contributions, valueing what other cultures offer, encouraging the contribution of diverse groups, empowering people to

strengthen themselves and others to achieve their maximum potential by being critical of their own bisexual and celebrating rather than just tolerating the difference in order to bring about Unity through diversity. These points are in accordance with what Armah advocates in his plays under study. A multicultural society with equal status for both races and cultures. In his play titled *Fix Up Brother Kiyi* empowers Black youth by teaching them the history of Black people so as to enable them to know their past and embrace their present. This helps to strengthen them to achieve their potentials by being critical of themselves. It enhances the idea that difference be celebrated rather than tolerated. This idea opens door for unity in diversity. Therefore multiculturalism is a catalyst for identity and belonging in Britain.

Multiculturalism and identity are closely connected to each other. When different culture came together, it is their difference in culture that shapes and determines the identity of each person. As a result, there should be given equal opportunities to all cultures for a peaceful co-existence within a given multicultural society like Britain. This will enable citizens to easily identify themselves.

Multiculturalism is closely associated with identity politics “the politics of differences” and “the politics of recognition” all of which are consider proper recognition of cultural diversity a necessary step toward revaluing disrespected identities and changing dominant patterns of representation and communication that marginalize certain group (Colombo I)

In view of the above quotation, multiculturalism and identity politics which entails bringing different people from different cultural background together, recognizing and respecting their cultural values and traditions will get them identified and represented in a multicultural society without any form of marginalization and oppression

We cannot talk of cultural identity and a multicultural British society without making mention of the term acculturation. According to J.W Benny in her book titled *Encyclopedia of Applied Psychology*:

The term acculturation can be defined as the process of learning and incorporating the values, beliefs, language, custom and mannerism of the new country immigrants and their families are living in, including behaviours that affect health such as dietary, habits, activity levels and substance as defined by J.W Benny in his Encyclopedia of applied psychology (2004).

In the concept of acculturation, the initial interest grew out of concern for the effects of European domination of colonial and indigenous people. Later, it focused on how immigrants (both voluntary and involuntary) changed following their entry and settlement into receiving societies. More recently, much of the work has been involved with how ethno cultural groups relate to each other and to change as a result of their attempt to live together in culturally plural society. Nowadays, all three foci are important as globalization result in every large trading and political relations. Indigenous natural population experience neo-colonialism: new waves of immigrants, sojourners, and refugees flow from these economic and political changing and a large ethno cultural population become established in most countries

The above definition and analysis is not different from what goes on in a contemporary multicultural British society. In the play *Fix Up*, Norma is a Black British who finds herself in Britain as a result of immigration. She has to undergo a number of changes both in her behaviour, her mentality and her action. Edward et al in Encyclopaedia of applied psychology defined acculturation as a process of attitudinal and behavioural change experienced by Individual who live in multicultural societies or who have come in contact with different cultures due to colonization, invasion, political change, globalization and the increased mobility of society due to technological advances.

In the plays under study, we can come to a conclusion with the above quotation that Black British citizen of the African descend or Afro Caribbean background in the 1950s were referred to as Black British West Indian people from the former Caribbean British colonies in the West Indies. They have gone through numerous changes. They have come in contact with people from different background, ethnicity and culture. Originally they are not British people but have migrated to Britain due to colonization, globalization, political changes and invasion and become Black British people. Take the case of Alice; she is a Black British woman. Her father is African while her mother is an English woman from North. As a Black British woman, she is caught between African and British culture. She finds out from brother Kiyi more about black youth. According to what her mother told her, black youth by the age 27 should be married with many children (at least 6 children). She is 34 without a child; she is disappointed with brother Kiyi for telling her that at his age he is not married. Black culture encourages the institution of marriage (early marriages), child bearing and being responsible. This is contrary to the white ways. Marriage and child bearing is a matter of choice. Norma is caught up in the process of acculturation. She stands between African and west culture but she learns to get along with it.

From our previous understanding of this study, cultural study is used alongside New Historicism because they both offer an insight into the interpretation and analysis of Kwei-Armah's texts under study. These critical frames share common characteristics such as history, culture, identity and race which are critically analysed in *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix Up*. The culture of a people has a lot to do with their experiences. The history and culture of a people is handed down from generation to generation therefore it is obvious that these texts are analysed from New Historical stand point.

In New Historicism "history" and "culture" are given absolute importance; they are considered as major tenets in this critical tool. Consequently, following a New Historicists approach, so much attention is given to history in textual analysis. The historical experiences of the author are considered very significant in the analysis of texts. New Historicism is a literary theory based on the idea that literature should be studied and interpreted within the context of both the history of the author and the history of the critic. New Historicism enables us to skim through the historical and biographical experiences of Kwei-Armah in the plays *Emina's Kitchen* and *Fix Up*. These experiences such as displacement, slavery and slave trade, torture and pain, domination and disregard, racism and language barrier facilitates our understanding of a cultural projection of Black British identity in the two plays. New Historicism also enables Black British people to be able to understand their roots, customs, traditions, their variation and uniqueness in culture that will get their identity represented in a multicultural society like Britain, as is clearly presented in the plays under study. Peter Barry in *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory* writes that New Historicism was coined by Stephen Greenblatt, an American critic, whose book. *Renaissance self-fashioning: From Moore to Shakespeare* has always been considered by New Historicist critic as the beginning of the theory. New Historicism enhances the comprehension of history through literally texts which inturn helps to understand literature through the lens of culture. Rajani Shama sees New Historism as an intensive analysis and an appraisal of a critical method for interpreting the renaissance texts.

Rajani Sharma in "New Historicism: *An Intensive Analysis And Appraisal*" writes that

New Historicism came in existence also because of critical manifesto of Stephen Greenblatt, an award winning literary critic, theorist and scholar who coined this very new term "New Historicism" for the first time with the intention to propound new critical method for interpreting the renaissance text (Sharma 1).

New historicism is a form of literary theory in which the goal is to understand history through literature, and literature through its cultural context which follows the 1950s field of history, of ideas and refers to itself as a form of cultural poetics'. It was first developed in the 1980s by English professor "Stephen Greenblatt" and gained widespread influence in the 1990s. The term new historicism was coined by Greenblatt when he "collected a bunch of essays and then, out of a kind of desperation to get the introduction done, wrote that "the essays represented something called a "New Historicism"

Relating New Historicism to cultural studies, Michael Foucault's concept of episteme seeks to reconnect a work with the time period with which it was produced and identify it with the cultural and political movement of the time. New Historicism assumes that every work is a product of the historic movement that created it. Specifically, New Historicism is a practice that has developed out of contemporary theory, particularly the structuralist realization that human systems are symbolic and subject to the rules of language, and the deconstructive realization that there is no way of positioning oneself as an observer outside the closed circle of textuality (Richter, p. 1205).

According to Tyson in his book *New Historicism*, new historicists do not believe that we can look at history objectively rather

[...] we interpret events as products of our time and culture and that we do have clear access to any but the most basic facts of history... our understanding of what such facts mean ... is ... strictly a matter of interpretation, not fact (Tyson, p. 279).

Moreover, New Historicism holds that we are hopelessly subjective interpreters of what we observe. With reference to Jan R. Veenstra in his book *The New Historicism of Stephen Greenblatt: On Poetics of Culture and the Interpretation of Shakespeare*. Greenblatt coined the expression "Poetics of Culture". This expression synonymously used for new historicism, states that:

Texts not only document the social forces that inform and constitute history and society but also feature prominently in the social processes themselves which fashion both individual identity and the socio-historical situation by means of an economic metaphor. Greenblatt explains how text and other symbolic goods by circulation in a society via channels of negotiation and exchange, contribute to the distribution of social energy by which he means the intensities of experiences that give value and meaning to life and that are also indispensable to the construction of self-awareness and identity (Veenstra, p. 175)

Going by New Historicism, Greenblatt makes us to understand that text are not limited to social forces that constitute and inform history and society but it also enable citizens to go by their identity and by their social and historical background. This situation can be linked to Brother Kiyi and Alice in the play, the bookshop runed by brother Kiyi has enabled Alice to fashion her ways of life, learn about her origin and what identifies the Black British people. It has also helped her to be able to discover the impacts of slavery and slave trade to mankind and therefore precipitate her desire to defend woman. She introduces the theme of feminism in the play. Alice further talks about reading and teaching Carl how to read poetry books but it should be a less sexy poet.

Alice: for a start, don't you think if you are introducing him to poetry which I do think is great, maybe you should choose a less sexy poet?

Brother Kiyi: less what?

Alice: a poet that does not exclude women from participating in the struggle (Kwei-Armah, 2004, p. 25).

Through test, brother Kiyi informs Carl and Alice about Claude, the father of the Harlem Renaissance, the poet quoted by Churchill to the British soldiers before the battle of Britain. Thus tracing the history of Britain through the use of historical allusion; a literary device used in the analyzation and the deconstruction of a text.

Brother Kiyi: It is Claude, the father of the Harlem Renaissance, the poet quoted by Winston Churchill to the British Soldiers before the battle of Britain Mackay we are talking about here (Kwei-Armah, 2004, p. 25)

Alice: It is because I'm a woman you use that condescending tone with me?

Brother Kiyi: I'm not using a condescending tone with you.

Alice: yes, you are! You're talking to me like in some stupid girl, which does not know what she is talking about. (Kwei-Armah, 2004 p.125)

To bring in mind the concept of New Historicism, it is glaring in Armah's two plays under study that it is a perfect theoretical frame to be used in analysing these plays. In other to illustrate the history of Black people in Britain, Armah makes use of the image of slavery and slave trade and its repercussions on Black life. Going by the history of Blacks in Britain, Alice makes reference to a black slave girl, very pretty who was taken to Grenada by his master and she was being hosted for sex. She put to birth colour children (mixed race). They both were referred to as niggers. One day, the illegitimate children of the master (Mr Reynold) went to

their father's original house to play. The legitimate children told them they can't play with them because they are niggers but the illegitimate rebuked this appellation and told them they both share the same father; he comes to their house, feeds and clothes them too. Mrs Reynold overheard them, through the window. That night Mrs Reynold got the slave girl flogged for three hours and her children were sold out into slavery within a year. This history is a call for concern to the Black and white race to recognize humanity as equal beings so as to give way for the celebration of difference rather than the segregation of races.

Through New Historicism, we can situate a text to its historical background which is the intensity of experiences that gives value and meaning to life and that are also indispensable to the construction of self awareness and identity.

From the aforementioned discussion it can be said that cultural studies and New Historicism are critical tools which enhance our understanding of the texts and also enable us to bring out the various tenets in which the play under study focuses its facts and realities of a contemporary multicultural Britain in which the black race wants to be identified as citizens of Britain in all aspects of life.

Review of Related Literature

For the past decades Black British writers are more concerned with writings which reflect their historical background and their culture. Since Black British people are either British citizen who migrate from foreign countries and settle in Britain or those that are born in Britain but traced their roots from Africa, the Caribbean and lastly Asia. The literature produced directly portrays a British society comprised of a mixture of people from diverse ethnic groups with different cultures, different religion and beliefs. Black British playwrights include Kwame Kwei Armah, Debbie Tucker Green, Roy Williams, Bola Agbaje and Lynette Goddard. Most of them targeted contemporary issues such as identity problem, racism, peaceful co-existence, multiculturalism, history, slavery and slave trade. Focus here is on Kwame Kwei-Armah and his plays on identity and Belonging. There have been a number of critics who have given their point of view on Black British identity, ethnic diversity, multiculturalism, racism and other themes put in place in Armah's plays *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix Up*. These writers include Peter Brown, Paul Taylor, Charles Spencer Yusri Farjar, William C. Boles, and Philip Fisher.

In *Black British Drama: A Transitional Story*, Michael Pearce looks afresh at the ways black theatre in Britain is connected to and informed by the spaces of Africa, the Caribbean

and the United State of America. Michael Pearce offers an exciting new approach to reading modern and contemporary Black British drama, examining plays by a range of writers including Michael Abbenetts, Mustapha Matura, Caryl Philips, Winsome Pinnock, Kwame Kwei-Armah, Debbie tucker green, Roy Williams and Bola Agbaje. The book combines historical documentation and discussion with close analysis to provide an in-depth, absorbing the account of post-war Black British drama situated within global and transnational circuits. Pearce starts from the premise that “a national paradigm alone is not capable of containing this complex and textured history or providing the necessary analytic tools with which to discuss it. He argues that analyses that focus entirely on Britain are limited by a three- generational approach that is largely biased towards trajectories of British-Caribbean first, second and third generation experiences. Rather, he maintains that there is need to examine the ways in which Black British plays are generated in, and speak to, multiple spatial, cultural and political contexts. To address these complex concerns, “Black British Drama: A Transitionan Story” is divided into three clear sections each of which foregrounds one of the transnational locations through the analysis of a number of contemporary works. The base of first, second and third generation Blacks is not limited to Britain but most first generation blacks have been victims of migration before finally settling in Britain. As a matter of fact, they have come across multiple cultures which make it difficult to build an identity that generally defines Black Britons.

According to Simon Hattenstone in his article “Kwame Kwei-Armah” He writes that:

As a black male you are told you can't do this. I've tried to go: yes we can". Kwame Kwei-Armah imposing face has just been splashed all over the news. Last week he was made artistic director of young Vic in London one of the Britain's most prestigious theatres [...] (Hattenstone, P. 1)

Hattenstone acknowledged the fact that Armah's plays have gone a long way to paint the picture of Black life in Britain, which advocates for “Black life matters” in Britain and the world at large. As a disputed Black British playwright, he has broken the record and taken black theatre to another level which was not the case in Britan before. Hattenstone says that growing up as a child, Armah did not just face racism from white people. Lighter skin black people told him that he was too dark, his nostrils too flared, his lips too thick. Teachers told him the structure of his mouth stopped him from speaking properly. A female cousin told him that if he pinched his nose a few times a day, he could streamline it. After a few weeks he gave up. Hattenstone acknowledged the fact that all of these happened because he was black but this

did not in any way discourage him from pursuing his dreams, it rather gave him the zeal to build his self-esteem and take black people to what they are today and what they aspire to be tomorrow. Kwei-Armah's plays have exposed racial domination and misrepresentation of Black race in Britain yet much has to be done by Black playwrights in so far as identity and belonging is concerned.

In an interview by Alicia Canter with "The Guardian" Kwei-Armah states:

What I have seen over the years is the rise of rage, the rise of a true understanding that disparity and inequality is deeply baked into our system and that's for the white horse too Kwei Armah says that for all he has changed, he is still in touch with the 19-year old Iam Roberts who decided it was time to find a new identity. "My 19-year old self is the person I judge myself by. The 19-year old Iam Roberts saw the world in a really clear fashion [...] (Canter, interview)

The above is in conformity with what Michael Pearce advocates for in his book *Black British Drama: A Transitional Story*. Kwei-Armah being one of the greatest leading Black British playwrights of the twenty-first century raises important questions on the current state of Black British identity. Pearce sees Black theatre taking a new face in order to redefine who they are and where they belong but Pearce thinks Black identity formation should not just be centered in Britain but should take a global outlook.

Benedict Nightingal is one of those critics whose concern about Black British problems has motivated her to give her opinion on the thematic concern of Black British writers including Kwame Kwei-Armah. Benedict Nightingal in a news paper titled "For the Time" says *Elmina's Kitchen* involves social problems which if not acknowledged and unchallenged will cause pain and hatred far beyond Murder Mile. He gives credit to Kwei-Armah for confronting such problems in such a funny poignant and in a wise way. These problems include themes such as violence, identity problem, cultural hegemony, illiteracy, racism and differentiation. Kwei-Armah has demonstrated a lot of wisdom in the course of dramatizing the play. These themes are based on current issues faced by Black British youths, the reason why such problems address the consequences to the British society in general and the black British people in particular.

Benedict's preoccupation is on violence and racism. In *Elmina's Kitchen*, Black British youth are so violent. Pointing to Digger, it is clearly stated that he behaves the way he does because of racism. Born in Murder Mile Hackney in Britain as a Black, he has known no better ways, he had been treated as a less privileged, has not had the opportunity to go to school, he

had spent his life in prison where he learnt the hard ways. He further identifies himself as a bad boy because his Black skin colour has differentiated him from the white people with numerous advantages as indigenes of Britain. The only way to get him sorted is to resort to crimes such as killing and looting. This is what identifies the Black British youth in Britain. These problems if not curbed will be too hard for murder Mile to contain, Benedict Nightingale observed:

Anastasia: Even if you have to spend your last cent, find someone. You can't make people kill your family and left it so. There must be somewhere else you could go (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 42)

In view of what goes on in *Elmina's Kitchen*, compulsory education should be given to all Blacks in Britain. This will step up their educational level, reduce illiteracy and upgrade their mentality towards violence and crime. Also, since racism is what most characters in *Elmina's Kitchen* faced as a challenge, it is important to get the Black race represented in the political, economic and socio-cultural activities. To help them to belong means inculcating in them the spirit of positivism. This will go a long way to reduce crime and violence if racism is wiped out. This is because most Black British youth resort to crime and violence due to the fact that there are not given equal opportunities like their whites counterparts thus they practice this so as to enable them to climb up the social ladder.

With reference to Chris Weldon in his article "Changing Nations" the multicultural situation of Britain is expressed in the works of second generation writers who have introduced a shift in focus as compared to Selvon, Lamming and Naipaul who were concerned with colonial, anti-colonial and post-colonial struggle. Weldon in his article postulate that:

Contemporary Black British and Asian writing addresses the changing social and cultural situation marked not just by inward migration, but also by devolution and regionalism, all of which have led to increasingly plural identities that challenge monolithic ideas of Britishness, Englishness, Scottishness and Welshness in ways that affects both minority and the majority [...].(Weldon, p. 48)

According to the above quotation, Weldon is concerned with the issues that are outlined in the works of Afro Caribbean and Asian writers. In his point of view, these writings seek to address post war migration and the fact that it has created multiple identities in the British society which result to identity crisis thus producing new hybrid forms. He further explains that most Blacks and Asian British born writers are concerned with the relationship between Britain and her former colonies, relation that remain important as a result of the fact that it continue to affect individual identities and their emotional feeling of belonging. The characters

presented in this works are born in Britain and they grow up in Britain, yet they do not have a sense of belonging neither in Britain nor elsewhere. These writers are motivated by the fact that the British society marginalize Blacks and Asian culture and pays little or no attention to the historical circumstances that must have brought ethnic and cultural diversity to Britain.

Lynette Goddard one of the major critics of multicultural and Black British literature, has examined Kwei-Armah as Britain's Black playwright of the twenty-first century. She observes on her article titled "Cultural diversity and Black British Playwriting on the main stream" points out that Kwei-Armah in *Elmina's Kitchen* gives an insight into the problems of Black British youth violence and the consequences of this violence to individuals and the entire British community. In her "Introduction" to *The Methuen Drama of Plays by Black British Writers* she discusses the violence and racism that characterizes contemporary multicultural Britain. She adds in her book titled *Black British playwrights on the Mainstream*, that contemporary Black British playwriting in general has re-examined and exposed the African British identity in a manner different from that of the past decades by moving from general concern and experiences of migration into examining the specific social issues and concerns that arise from living in Britain today. These Black British writers particularly acknowledged the experiences of third generation Britons. According to her, their plays are grounded within a British theatrical context both in terms of form, social realities and the representation of nihilistic urban violence. She goes further to examine the ways in which Kwame Kwei-Armah, Roy Williams, Debbie Tucker and Bola Agbaje are engaged in the explicit representation of contemporary crisis of race, crime and black experience as a whole in multicultural Britain.

In a review of *Elmina's Kitchen* by Peter Brown, he acknowledged the fact that they (Armah and Peter) both hail from the same town Huddles field in Yorkshire .Meeting his friend after a long while of separation, he tells us that Kwei Armah being a childhood friend is not a little Street wise, he articulates successfully, very intelligent even though a Black in Britain. Meeting together again, their conversation basically was a reflection of the life in Huddles Field and the discussion of the play *Elmina's kitchen*, Peter Brown told Kwame in their discussion:

"I went back to York Shire a few months ago to see my mom. I want her to move, but she won't. The area is terrible now. I won't go out after 8Pm when I am there"
(Brown, discussion)

According to Peter Brown the situation is getting out of hand. Crime wave has gained grounds as a result of Joblessness, illiteracy, discrimination and racial segregation. Huddles

Field occupants are massively Black British people. The aforementioned themes identifies them; even though most of them are illiterates, the author of the plays under study finds a way to get himself educated, reading his biography we are made to understand now that he had a great desire to acquire knowledge. His desire is reflected in his play *Fix Up* in Brother Kiyi's book shop which is aimed at informing and educating Black Britons about their history and how they can go about it in Britain. His writings are satirical in nature, in a polite and humorous way; he acts out the life of Black British people informing the whole world on what is going on in Britain and leaving it suspended for the whole world to give their opinions. Brown confirms the fact that Kwame Kwei-Armah's carefully balanced and well-crafted scripts has described immensely a disquieting and unveiling situation of Blacks in Britain.

Peter Brown qualifies *Elmina's Kitchen* as a 'Bleak play' because no solutions are proposed and none present themselves as practical. The attraction of easy money and monetary wealth negates attempt to persuade some of our young Citizens. He feels that an honest living is one that can be attractive or rewarding. It is more poignant because his glimpse into frightening reality that many people endured daily on a very real sense. The play is more a documentary than fiction and more alarming, still is the knowledge that we are all responsible. According to this review, what motivates Kwei-Armah to write this dramatic text is that Black British youths and Asians are attracted by easy money. They engage in crime and violence in order to get rich overnight rather than going to school, working hard and living a good life. He wants both the Britain and Black Britons to all work towards a change since crime and violence are caused by marginalization of the Blacks.

Peter Brown does not just see *Elmina's Kitchen* as a depressing play, he appreciates the fact that Kwei-Armah sincerely weaves into the play much of what is rich about black culture, a great sense of humour permeates almost every scene and is highlighted with someone liners. For example; Clifton (Deli's father) says to the vivacious cook at the restaurant "you look good and I look great" he subtly observes his son's business departure into fast food but tells his son that "West Indian fast food is a contradiction." With this he made it clear and contradicts West Indian fast food in Britain with what their original culture has got in stock for them. Brown further admires Black culture in the field of music and songs. In his great admiration, he affirms the fact that Armah has taken upon himself to showcase Black culture when he says that the singing by the whole cast during the funeral scene at the beginning of act two was a simple but aptly melancholic echoing, the great genres of Black music. He says that the life

music from Judeh camera and Atango Zima band played before the play started during the change of scene was superb.

That notwithstanding, Peter Brown thinks that *Elmina's Kitchen* is being performed to the wrong audience. In his opinion, it ought to be performed in schools, clubs or even in the streets as well. Being an ex-teacher, Peter Brown doubts whether that will have any immediate impact on the intractable problems the play describes because the causes run very deep. An attempt to promote solutions will need vision, humanity and compassion as well as some radical re-thinking about the direction to which our whole society is taking. In the play it's hard to be pessimistic, highly shocking and unnerving; *Elmina's kitchen* is never the less highly recommended

Charles Spencer in "The Daily Telegraph" says *Elmina's kitchen* is a flawed work, but one with a huge heart, beginning as an often broad comedy before swerving off into all together darker territory. The action is set in Hackney where our hero Deli, now played by Kwei Armah himself who is best known as an actor in BBC TV series casually is facing a tough time. His sponging father who deserted him as a child, has returned to haunt him, his 19 year old son Ashley is going off the rails, and the West Indian take away restaurant he inherited from his beloved mother is struggling to survive. As if all that were not enough his brother's in jail. Despite a few irritating loose ends in the plot, the dramatist, succeeds triumphantly in evoking life in Hackney's "murder mile" and showing how attitudes among British Blacks have changed over the years'

Furthermore, Charles Spencer thinks the older generation seems relaxed, feckless and content to soothe their sorrows with rum, and chasing women, they even look back with something approaching affection to their early immigrant days when white Britons would "feel your bottom to see if you had a tail" but the younger generation is less easily consoled. For Ashley, the only goal in life is to be a big hard gangster with a gun and a BMW to drive and unfortunately, one of his father's associates "Digger" is all too happy to lure him into a life of murderous crime. *Elmina's kitchen* deserves to succeed and if it does, I hope it prompts a West End revival of Roy Williams's brilliant 'Fallout' and even more powerful and disturbing account of young Black Britain today.

According to Paul Taylor's article "The Independent Culture and News Letter", it is reviewed that brother Kiyi, a Black intellectual originally named Peter Allan, runs a bookshop in Tottenham whose shelves groan with high minded tomes about Black heritage that precious

few people actually buy. Spending his days listening to tapes of Garvey and James Baldwin, this figure with his great mane of greying Rasta dreadlocks is more dreamer than businessman. The premises are in danger of being converted into luxury flats and amusingly given defiant coiffure a store flogging Afro- sheen and other black hair products.

One of the strengths of the play is that it does not present brother Kiyi as a simple case of beleaguered pure idealism. His generosity is evident from the paternal care he takes of Carl an illiterate former crack addict and from the way he is prepared to spread enlightenment by lending out books for free. There is also something remote and emotionally withholding in him, as he witnessed the hurtfully rationed intimacy of his relationship with Clair Benedict's sympathy humorously deadpan Norma, a friend who is prepared to give him her savings in an effort to rescue the situation. He's touchy and arrogant, and the suspicion arises that hosting for him, is as much a psychological refuge as the pointer to a better future.

The irony where by this scholar of slave histories turns out to have suppressed the darkest facts of his own past is conveyed via a plot whose tactic of delaying the obvious revelation cannot help but feels old- fashion and melodramatic, even in Angus Jackson's absorbing and well-acted production, Nina Sosanya's Alice, the sexy feminist, new comer of, mixed race or "dual heritage" as she prefers to call it) loiters in the shop with an all- too over narrative and thematic intent. She comes across more as a catalyst than as a character that has been imagined from within. She is there to spark nostalgia for his old, lost anger in Kiyi and to provoke and eroticized hostility in Kwesi, the handsome, leather coated militant who lives in the fight upstairs.

Philip Fisher postulates that Kwame Kwei-Armah's last play *Elmina's kitchen* in the contested theatre, won him an evening standard award for most promising playwright. In that, 'Fix up' seems far stronger and has three unforgettable characters it deserves even better. In his review, *Fix Up* is set in gigantic Tottenham bookshop run by the magisterial word-worshipping brother Kiyi. This is a man with dreadlocks to his knees who believes in Black Power to the exclusion of love and life. Jeffery Kissons delivers a nice mix of pride, passion and, ultimately, defeat with great skills. The shop is a monument to Great Black Writers and also to a pride and historical sensibility that does not seem to be passing to a younger generation. As a new land lord tries to evict in favour of a hair supply shop, there is feeling that had Nell Dun's steaming been set in a bookshop rather than a Sauna, it would have been *Fix up*.

In Yusri Fajar's review, he thinks that; Black British Identity has become that intriguing issue in Britain since Black immigrants settled and created a diaspora community there. The Black immigrants in Britain should negotiate their identities with the whites and adapt to the British Community which tends to position them as "the others". The image of identity of the Black immigrants has been saturated and stereotyped by some constructed characteristics such as uneducated, uncivilized, inferior and even criminal.

Black British drama has been considered as the paramount literary work which represents Black British identity and become a means for Black to foreground their voices with the dominant white narrative and cultures. Peacock claims that Black dramatists have gradually obtained opportunities to express their ideas and voices in Britain, although they have been regarded by white majority to be outside mainstream culture. In *Elmina's kitchen* Armah striking delineates the Caribbean community in Britain and highlights the distinct ways of its members to survive in the British society. As a minority group, Black British descendants are imbued with the identity which is reflected through language, arts clothes, customs, ways of thinking and behaviour. More specifically, black British identity in *Elmina kitchen* is marked by crime and violence.

D. Kerth Peacock states that the identity of Afro-Caribbean descendants in Britain notably those who are young, is influenced by gang and gun. Violence and crime have become the dark side of Black British life in Britain. Both gang and gun potentially bring about virulent social conflict which can bear social disorder and cause the dead of people in the community.

Stuart Hall understanding of cultural identity allows us to deconstruct and reconstruct who we think we are. To him if the political events of recent history have taught us anything about cultural identity, it is that the answer to the question of whom we are differs radically, depending on who you ask. For some, it remains the unbroken continuums of a common history beneath our differences, negates the need for cultural identity and the Diaspora", the theorist Stuart Hall argued that cultural identity is not only a matter of "being but of becoming, belonging as much as to the future as it does to the past. From Hall's perspective Truth to his story, Hall's life was defined by not one but several identities; this is the case in *Elmina's Kitchen* in which characters are not able to take a stand as to what is their identity. This is the case with Clifton who stands between African identity and or British identity.

The above reviews from different writers have presented familiar but different opinons

in Kwei-Armah's plays concerning Identity and belonging. They have shared similar opinions of the fact that colonialism and its impacts is the root cause of all the problems faced by first, second and third generation blacks in Britain. They both shared the opinion that Black Britons have moved from one geographical environment to another and have come across a number of different cultures which have shaped their identity. This must have been the reason why they find it hard to get a defined identity. They also share similar opinion of identification in the ways of life of first, second and third generation of Blacks in Britain. Considering the influence of change, these three generation Blacks happen to put in place different ways of life and different compartment which identifies them. This has been a challenge to Black British identity and belonging issue. While first generation Blacks were direct victims of slavery and torture in the hands of their white counterpart, second generation Blacks inherited the consequences of this ill-treatment but could not stand to bear it like their forefathers. They became agitative and resorted to all forms of malpractices in order to climb up the social ladder. Well as third generation Blacks stood against racial discrimination, they want the Black race to be represented and given an identification which will enable them to belong in the society in which they live.

They differ in their opinions in various ways: while Naghtigal thinks that *Elmina's Kitchen* involves social problems which if not address will cause pain and hatred far beyond Murder Mile, Weydon thinks that Afro-Caribbeans and Asian writers seek to address post-war migration consequences. He adds to the fact that it has created multiple identities in Britain which has posed identity and belonging issues. On one hand, Pearce thinks that Black British problems are not limited to Britain but should be addressed from first, second and third generation Black identity issues around the world. This is because their origin concerns global issues which if not traced may hinder Black British identity formation. Spencer on his part looks at the frustration and contentment in which first generation Blacks have become. This is because of their past experiences in the hands of their colonial masters. They have lost their cultural values to the white Britons thus have lost what identifies them as a consequent have resorted in the act of drinking rum and smoking weed. This therefore has introduced them to a new identity.

Eventhough Spencer sees *Elmina's Kitchen* as a flawed work; Peter Brown appreciates the fact that Kwei-Armah's weaves into the play much of what is rich about Black Culture. He recommends that *Elmina's Kitchen* be performed in schools, clubs and even streets so as to get the world informed about what is going wrong in order to provide rapid solutions to these

problems because the cause runs very deep hence it has posed an issue in identity and belonging in Britain. On the other hand, Yuri Farjar think Blacks immigrants in Britain should negotiate their identity with the white and adapt to the British community since they settled and created a diasporic community in Britain.

From the above reviews, it is obvious that *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix Up* are plays that have portrayed both socio-cultural problems of Blacks in Britain, one of which is identity and belonging. These problems have come as a result of colonialism, migration, slavery and slavetrade, displacement and racism which are themes addressed in the two plays under study. While some reviewers dispute the fact that these two plays have acted out Black's preoccupations as per their identity and belonging issue in Britain, most of the reviews appreciate Armah's insight into colonialism and racism as the root cause of misrepresentation of Black culture and identity in Britain. It is now left for the ongoing analysis to unravage what has not been said or done by the Critics and author of the plays under study which will be drifted towards peaceful co-existence and the celebration of difference.

Kwame Kwei-Armah is motivated by his experiences as a Black living in Britain. Due to the black Melanin on his skin, he sees himself different from the white race. He is further moved by the reactions of the white race towards the Black race in Britain. He therefore questions his identity as a Black in Britain. As a result, he traced his origin as a Ghanaian. In this regard, he finds out that people with misplaced identity are in a dilemma in Britain as is reflected in most of his characters in his two plays under study.

Cultural Studies and New Historicism are the aforementioned critical tools that have been used to analyse this study. These two critical frames are applied in accordance with overlapping tenets found in the plays under study. This frames broadens our understanding of Black British Identity problem in Britain and the rejection of dominant notion of cultures over the years. These frames do not only enhance the understanding of these problems in a multicultural society, it gives a head way to proposing possible solutions to these problems as seen in Kwame Kwei-Armah's *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix Up*.

Since culture and history are closely related to each, it is therefore important to brainstorm on the historicity of Black British People. This will be expatiated in the next chapter

CHAPTER TWO

HISTORICITY AND BLACK BRITISH IDENTITY

The aim of this chapter is to establish a link between Black British identity in a multicultural Britain and how these are reflected in literature. Firstly, there is an attempt to trace the Black British identity in relation to its social and political history, taking cognizance of the fact that they have moved from one cultural heritage to another before finally settling as Black British people. Secondly, it points out the different elements that identify Black British people. These include ethnicity and the various cultural elements found in the texts *Fix Up* and *Elmina's Kitchen*. The chapter approaches it from the standpoints of New Historicism and Cultural Studies, it shows how through history we can situate culture to time and place. From these perspectives, there is an attempt to reveal the culture that identifies a given people of a given place and the influence of time changing to the culture of these people.

New Historicists are more concerned with time in literary analysis. This is because time plays a very important role in the interpretation and the understanding of the work of literature. As a matter of fact, most writers are influenced by their life experiences and historical

occurrences. It is therefore imperative to state that history has a major influence on Kwei-Armah's *Elmina's Kitchen and Fix Up*. It is equally relevant to analyse the works based on the impacts of history on Black British identity. The question is how does history influence the identity of Black British people?

According to Edward Quinn in *A Dictionary of Literary and Thematic Terms*:

[...] the issue of identity frequently turns on the conflict within the children of immigrant parents torn between their ethnic origins and their aspirations to succeed in the new world. (Quinn, p. 205)

Most often than not immigrant into Britain finds out that they neither belong to Britain nor to their original country; a situation in which characters in *Elmina's Kitchen and Fix UP* find themselves. They are constantly somewhere between the host cultural identity and their indigenous cultural identity. They end up exhibiting and living bit of traits of both cultures thereby situating themselves in-between and becoming hybrids. It can be said that Black British people have a problem of identity and belonging as seen in Armah's state of confusion in which he changes his name from Iam Roberts to Kwame Kwei-Armah yet he cannot let go his childhood identity when he states in an interview that:

My 19-year old self is the person I judge myself by. The 19-year-old Iam Roberts saw the world in a really clear fashion. I can sometimes call it pragmatism; he would have called it compromise. He saw truth without the complications of responsibility (Kwei-Armah, interview)

Therefore Black British people are left with no option than to historically trace their origin. This provides answers to their identity problem and it will enable them to get their identity represented in a multicultural Britain. It is therefore important to present the social and political history of Black Britons in an attempt relate black British identity to their cultural and historical background as is the case with the author under study.

Black British Social and Political History

The term "Black" historically has had a number of appellations as a racial and political label and may be used in a wider socio-political context to encompass a broader range of non-European ethnic minority population in Britain. This has become a controversial definition. As results of this, Black British people are concerned about knowing their identity through history.

Black British people have lived in Britain for many centuries, certainly from the times of the Roman invasions and perhaps before. There were never any acts of parliament enshrining

legal discrimination against them on the ground of color or race, thus difficult to identify in records. Until immigration following the Second World War, they were very few (estimates vary between 10,000 and 20,000 between 1500 and 1807) and they did not live in separate communities. These factors mean that their history in Britain has largely been subsumed in wider studies of racial prejudice, the British slave trade, slavery itself, or abolition, on which a great deal has been written, and in most the focus has been on how white people perceived blacks.

There seem to be three distinct phases in writing about the history of black people in Britain: the first covered the period up to the 1960s, the second the 30-odd years up to the 1990s and the last phase from the 1990s up to present day. These three phases correlate to what might be called intellectual fashions in historical interpretation so as to apply to other fields of history. In simple terms; the first phase was the product of a period of social stability. After the Second World War, political and social landscape changed dramatically.

According to Kathleen Charter's Article entitled "Black History", "M. Dorothy George seems to have been the first modern historian to mention the presence of black people in London". In the 18th century, London life contained six pages on black history subject. There seems to be no other scholarly works dealing with black people in Britain until 1948, when Kenneth Little became the first to look at the history of black people in Britain as a distinct group.

These early works treated Black people as part of the British population without separating them from white people. What is called Black History developed from America from the 1960s, later it became part of the growing interest in the history of minority groups or hitherto unregarded sections of the population like women and the working classes. This black history emerged in a period when Marxist theories dominated academic study. The Nigerian Folarin Shyllon's books *Black slaves in Britain* and *Black people in Britain* which were published for the institution of Race Relations, had very different tone from previous works. Shalloon who was then based in the United States, made assumptions about the experiences of Black people in Britain in which she cited the role America played in promoting slavery and discriminations in the United States. The history of Black people in America has continued to influence studies of their positions in Britain, never the less assuming that black people were enslaved, a belief that persists today, despite Lord Mansfield judgment of positive law, that is only "specific Act of Parliament", could introduce it. As well as those who saw

Black people as a distinct sub section of the British population, there were some who regarded them as part of the working class, like Ron Ramdin, Peter Line Baugh and Maurice Reducer. The latter two in particular saw black people as part of the oppressed underclass, whose struggle was paramount.

The journalist Peter Fryer's book *Staying Power* which is generally taken to be a standard work on this subject began a move to look at individuals. The chronological structure was similar to that of previous writers but he took a wider view of the subject. Previous historians looked at Black people in Britain as if slavery and poverty were the only thing that defined them. This is seen in the play *Fix Up* as brother Kiyi relates the story of the slave narrative. Although Fryer, who was a communist, wrote a great deal about slavery and political involvement, he looked behind them to see how Black people were not stigmatized outside but were woven in to English society as workers and founders of families.

Most works in the second period took the institution of slavery as their starting point. Individuals appear primarily to illustrate arguments. They were issue- driven by more recent studies to take an alternative approach. They focused on individuals and events. These issues emerged but were secondary problems to the people. It is perhaps not a coincidence that an increasing number of these works are done by women. There is a mark contrast in the way men and women in general approach the subject. Men are much more concerned with the authority and the obvious manifestation of it through laws and financial power and women interested in social relationship, although they are always individual differences. It is therefore unsurprising that it was a woman M. Dorothy George, who first noticed Black people in London and another; Gretchen Grerzin who is a Black England. In her book entitled *London Life in the Eighteenth Century* she made two important contributions. The first was to realize that in the 18th century England, class seems to be the determining factor in how Black people were perceived, not color or race. The second was to look at people as human beings not pieces of evidence in abstract arguments about color race and prejudice.

With the move away from theories of collectivities, the emphasis has shifted to individuals and empowerment. It has also changed from examining how white people in authority regarded themselves to foregrounding the experiences of the Black for example, Stephen Brainwood's work on the Sierra Leone project of 1787 did not assume the previous writers consideration as a way for the government to get rid of poor, stigmatized Black people in London but he looked at the aims, ambitions and actions of Black people involved to bring

out their own agenda. Other people have carried out thematic examinations of the role Black people played in areas of British life like in the arm forces, music and the art, religion and so on. However their presence and contributions to Scotland, Ireland, Wales and various Islands have not yet been explored in depth. If Black men are hard to recover, Black women are even more so because there is even little evidence about the life of the majorities of them before the 20th century.

Due to the problems of identifying Black people in records before the 20th century, majority of academic study of Black people in Britain have concentrated on a handful of noteworthy and therefore exceptional people who appear in print. Fryer had included numerous references to unremarkable Black people taken from primary sources in archives but Norma Myers was the first to collect data systematically and attempt some statistical analysis. Influenced by the work of the “Cambridge Group for population study and social structure”, Kathleen Chater assembled a data base of some 3000 Black people in England and Wales during the period of the British slave trade from which she extracted statistical evidence on sex ratios, ages, areas of origin, appearances at old Bailey school and other aspects of the lives of what might be termed the average Black person in the long 18th century.

Recently, there have been calls for black history curriculum in the UK to be updated to make it more diverse and reflective of Britain’s multicultural society. In response, the government’s Department for Education said “teachers can include black voices and history as a natural part of lessons in all subjects.

Lavinia Stennett, founder of an institute called “The Black Curriculum”: an Organization that teaches Black British history in Schools believes that this will help build a sense of identity in every young person in the UK which in turn helps to educate every one about racism. According to her, black history is an important topic which schools can teach to children of all ages as part of the history curriculum. She thinks Blacks have been in Britain long before colonialism thus deserves to be taught black history at its prime.

In an interview with Kameron Virk on BBC NEWS Stennett states that:

We have existed in Britain and been pioneers, inventors, icons. And then colonialism happened, and that has shaped the experiences of Black people, but that is not all we are (Stennet, interview)

From the above quotation, we are made to understand that Black people have contributed enormously in building the British Empire even before colonialism in which Black people became subject of colonization. Black history in Britain should be taught in consideration to their contributions for the growth of Britain. This will help bring out their identity and give them a sense of belonging.

In an interview with George the poet in “News Night” about black life, he states that a lack of education about Black British history and the British Empire plays a part in racism in the U K and our discussions about it. Using art forms like poetry and drama to help students get a mastering of black history would help build an identity and a sense of belonging in every young person in the UK and would help educate every one about racism. The transatlantic slave trade and the U S civil rights movement are largely the only black history lessons taught in U K schools basically in October when Black history month is celebrated. Why not teach the history of “The Ivory Bangle Woman”, “The Tudor Period and John Blanke”, “The First British Black Queen”. There are Black British historical events and should be taught in schools.

Melody Triumph, a policy specialist at the Black Curriculum (an organization which teaches Black History in schools) states in her article “The Black British History You May Not Know About” that

If you're omitting different histories and narratives, you're saying that these people aren't part of this country, this nation, these heritage or they're not important enough to be taught as common knowledge (Triumph, p. 1)

This is in confirmation of what the white race has for long held about the black race. According to them, blacks are not part of the British society, they are not important to be taught as common knowledge. This explains why the most important part of their history in Britain is left out but that part which is provocative and referred to as “the slave narrative” is taught in schools. This is glaring in the play *Fix Up* when brother Kiyi attempt to teach and sell Black history books in his bookshop proved abortive. This gives the blacks a misplaced identity with no sense of belonging thus their misrepresentation in Britain. The slave status given to them paved the way for racism.

Some might think the first Black people in Britain arrived from Britain's colonies- the countries in Africa, the Caribbean and Asia which Britain ruled over the years, in some cases for centuries and in other cases after World War Two. That's not true, says Lavinya from the black Curriculum. According to the critic we know that Black people were in Britain since

during the Roman times and there are examples such as The Ivory Bangle Lady, the British first Black Queen

The Ivory Bangle Lady is the name given to the remains discovered in York in 1901 which are now on display in the York Museum. Archeological analysis reveals that although she was born in Roman Britain she is likely to be of North African descent. The remains have been dated to the second half of the 4th Century. She was found with jet and elephant Ivory bracelets, earrings, pendants, beads, a blue glass jug and a glass mirror. In other words, she was not poor. It puts into question assumptions that Black people have never been inspirationally wealthy or had any kind of wealth. The important part of the above description of The Ivory Bangle Lady is that she was never poor and she was black. This explains that blacks in Britain are not originally poor, savage, dull and servants as told to them by their white counterparts. They were equally inspirationally wealthy. They contributed financially in building the British Empire thus should be given the right to belong in Britain. This explains why brother Kiyi in the play *Fix Up* will emphasis on the fact that black history has to be traced and read in schools. His bookshop is basically open in order to enable black history books read and understood by all. In his opinion, reading black history books will go a long way to enhance the understanding of black British identity as per their roots and culture.

[...] on Thursday , late afternoon in early October "Black History Month" outside is very cold, we are in Fix Up, a small old school Black conscious bookshop. The place is much too small to hold the many shelves and bookcases that jam and squeeze up next to each other [...]. (Kwei-Armah, 2004, p. 1)

Reading black history books as taught in school, we are informed about John Blanke an African trumpeter who was in Britain in the 1500s. Lavinya Stennet further explains that during the Tudor period there were hundreds of black migrants living in England. For those who are a bit rusty on Tudor dates, we're talking about the 1500s. John Blanke, an African trumpeter, was one of them. His face can be seen inscribed into a 60ft long roll depicting the prestigious West minister Tournament of 1511, an elaborate Party which Henry VIII put on to celebrate the birth of a son. There's even a letter from John Blanked to Henry VIII asking for a pay rise. Lavinya Stennets in *The Black Curriculum* says: 'He petitioned for 8p a day. I don't know what the conversation is today, but that showed he knew his worth' From the quotation, it can be historically affirmed that, Black British people were not just freed slaves, savaged, poor and uneducated as prejudiced, but they have been part and parcel of the social and political parade

of the British society since 1511. The fact that he was petitioned for 8 pounds a day is a clear indication that the black trumpeter John Blanke knew his worth.

In addition, the British first Black Queen was a princess from Germany who became a British Queen after marrying King George III and many historians believe Queen Charlotte had African ancestry. They got married in 1761 and Charlotte was the mother of two British Monarchs- George IV and William IV. It's been argued that despite coming from Germany, Queen Charlotte descended from a black branch of the Portuguese royal family. King Alfonso III of Portugal Conquered the city of Faro from the moors- Muslims from North Africa who lived in modern-day Spain and Portugal during the middle ages in the 13th century. Alfonso was thought to have had three children from the city governor's daughter. One of their sons, Martin Alfonso Chichorro, is also said to have married into a family with black ethnicity. He and his wife, Inés Lourenco of Sousa Chichorro had many descendants, including Queen Charlotte. Queen Charlotte, whether she had African ancestry or not, joined the Royal Family in the Century when Britain started slave- trading which made it vastly wealthy. Lavinya says that:

A lot of the time, we start with black history in London- its London Centric. But a lot of Glasgow's wealth actually comes from the tobacco, the sugar, the cotton that was created and sustained by enslaved people in Jamaica, Trinidad and Barbados (Lavinya, in an interview)

Going by the words of Kwesi in the play *Fix Up*, "Can European repents for slavery?" It is evident in the above quotation that; the economic wealth of Britain is what it is today thanks to enslaved Black labour. Although Black people in Britain stand a greater chance to be applauded for British wealth power, they are instead misrepresented and racialized. This explains why Kwesi and brother Kiyi launched a protest inviting Carl to join them in the protest for the reparation of slavery.

Kwesi: Hey Brother Carl, are you coming on the match

Carl: I am not your brother, and what match is that?

Kwesi: The reparation to slavery match. (Kwei-Armah, 2004, p. 121)

It is important to teach Black history in schools to enable them know that Many of Glasgow's prominent city centre streets are named after the 18th century slave owners who made fortunes from plantations. Therefore if Britain's Empire was strong it was thanks to the contributions of black slave and the wealth gotten from slave trade which helped in building

the British Empire. Stennet further explains the fact that Black people are called slaves but are not accorded their contributions as slaves in Britain. «You're told that black people were slaves, but you're not told the fruits of their labor are actually the streets we walk on" (Stennet, interview)

From this analysis, it is clear that Blacks in Britain deserve a special status because of their impacts as slaves in that society. They have contributed enormously thus deserve better than just being called slaves. Lavinya Stennet says "teaching slavery is important but you need to "contextualize it" Talking about who gained from it, the people not only in the colonies but also here in the UK. These quotations are in line with what is aspired by Armah in his play *Fix Up*. Through brother Kiyi and his bookshop, Armah wants blacks to know about their history, to know about the impacts of slavery and slave trade to the blacks and their contributions to the development of Britain. This will enhance their identity and culture as people of a stronger race whose energy and force put in place is the reason why the British Empire is what it is today. That also means teaching about "Black people in Scotland who were part of the abolition of slave trade". All you heard about is "William Wilberforce" A British politician who campaigned the abolision of slavery. In the play *Fix Up*, Brother Kiyi is an epitome of a patriotic Black British who fought against slavery and slave trade on the part of Blacks in Britain. He organized a match for the reparation of slave trade and slavery inflicted on Blacks in Britain. Kiyi and Kwesi asked Carl to join in a match for their people's right to be repaid for slavery inflicted on Blacks by their white counterparts.

Kwesi: Hi Brother Carl, are you coming on the match?

Carl: I.m not your brother, and which match is this?

Kwesi: The reparation for slavery match (Kwei-Armah, 2004, p. 121)

What we should know about Black History is that it is not limited to 1948 and 1971 migration of the Wind rush generation but it includes the blacks movement into Britain during the Romans Invasion maybe before this period. "When we talk of Caribbean Migration into England we often think of the Wind rush generation, people who arrived Britain between 1948 and 1971. But black people were actually brought over from Jamaica to fight in World War One" says Lavinya. According to the critic,

My great uncle came to England at the age of 17 to help the war therefore settling in London afterwards. But my uncle was "one of the lucky ones" because he wasn't sent

back after the war. When soldiers returned to the U K after WWI, there was shortage of jobs and lack of opportunities. White people made the link that they were not getting jobs because of the black people communities [...] (Stennet, interview)

Kwei-Armah in his play *Fix Up* reiterates the issue of racism which is the root cause of the problem of identity and belonging in Britain. In the above quotation we can get phrases like color bar, race riot in which the white race plays against the black race. Alice says in the play that she feels Kyesi who is the Head of All-Black African Party is hateful and that should be the reason why people do not want to go out with Black Africans but Brother Kiyi defines racism as the feeling of superiority from one race to another but thinks Blacks in Britain are not racist because they are not economically superior. Brother Kiyi further explains that the reason why he loans books and not sell them is because he wants people to be informed about racism, slavery and misrepresentation. He explains that while he was selling books people go for nosensical books such as *Black Dad Kissing Black Mum* rather than going after educative text such as *Destruction of Black Civilization by Chancellor Williams, Capitalism and Slavery*. According to Brother Kiyi, these books will enable the Black race to reaffirm their culture; will therefore help to get their identity represented.

Poverty and lack of jobs were a big factor in the riots, but according to researcher James Braker, there was also a fear that black men and white women were starting family. It fits into the hyper- sexualisation of black men. White men felt threatened because they felt that black men were taking their women. From the above explanation, it should be noted that what goes on in a contemporary Britain does not start today. It all started far back after world war one in which those black military people who assisted in the war became a problem to the white race. The problem of racism in Britain is the brain behind discrimination, poverty, crime and violence and above all identity and belonging. Kwei-Armah in his two plays under study brings out the importance of history in identity formation of Blacks living in Britain. Most of his characters identify themselves with crime and violence due to their past and present experiences. In the play *Fix up* Brother Kiyi makes use of historical allusion to lay emphasis on the role of war in the history of Britain. He made mention of the poet Claude who was the father of Harlem Renaissance, the poet quoted by William Churchill to the British soldiers before the battle of Britain (Kwei-Armah, 2004, p. 125)

After world war two, black people from the Caribbean and Africa and people from India, were asked to come to Britain to help rebuild the country. There were put to work in public sector roles, like driving buses; but in Bristol, the Omnibus Company, run by the council,

refused to employ black and Asian drivers, which eventually led to a boycott of buses across the whole city. Lavinya says “it wasn’t as easy as that time” it was not illegal to discriminate based on race. The first race relations Act was passed in 1965, but did not include legislation about employment or housing until 1968 (Stennett, interview).

Paul Stephenson, Roy Hackett and Guy Bailey were the brains behind the boycott, Paul drew inspiration from the bus boycott in the United State, which started when Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat for a white passenger when the bus was at capacity, following what they did in Bristol, Hackett organized blockades and sit-down protest to prevent the buses from getting through the city Centre "white women taking their kids to school or going to work would ask us what it was about". He told the BBC. "Later they came and joined us".(Lavinya, interview) Students showed support too and it was backed by the local MP Tony Benn as well as Harold Wilson, who became labor leader a year later. ON the same day, Martin Luther king’s JR delivered his famous "I Have A Dream" speech after marching on Washington DC on 28th August 1963 pressure had built enough over the summer that the Bristol Omnibus company announced a change in policy (Lavinya, interview). By mid-September 1963, Bristol had its first non-white bus conductor-Raghibir Singh, an Indian-born Sikh who had lived in Bristol since 1959 and further blacks Asian crews followed. Paul Stephenson, Guy Bailey and Roy Hackett all received OBES for their action.

Relating the above to what goes on in the two plays under study, it can be traced that Black British identity is marked by segregation, discrimination, racism, and oppressions. *In Elmina’s Kitchen* Clifton sings about discrimination and segregation between white and black race. In football the white people will say:

[...] go home you black bastard [...]. In England what you must understand is whatever you do, where ever you rise, please realize you could never disguise, you are black man in cold land .(Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 55)

In the play *Fix Up*, Kwesi and Kiyi Discuss about Michael Jackson being a member of a militant Black organization for 10 years. Kwesi sees Jackson as a prominent manifestation of Black self-hate. According to Kwesi, Michael Jackson should have been shot the moment he bleached his skin to look like a white person. Brother Kiyi asked Kwesi to show him forgiveness and Kwesi ask him if he can forgive slavery:

Can the European repent for that? The only thing this world understands is Power. Till we have, no matter what is up there (pointing to head) we are just joking. (Kwei-Armah, 2004, p.120)

In the same vein, we can see Brother Kiyi and Kwesi asking Carl to join in the match for their people's right to be repaid for slavery.

Kwesi: Hey, Brother Carl, are you coming on the match?

The reparation for slavery match (Kwei- Armah, 2004, p.121).

Brother Kiyi has always been concerned with historical books because it brings to mind the history of the black slavery. They have been brought to Britain and America as slaves. Their past and present represent nothing to the white race. He therefore stands his grounds to educate and inform the youth about their origin and ethnicity so that they can get their identity represented in Britain as the race behind the economic power of Britain and its development. This is the reason why it is important to brainstorm on the biography of the author so as to place more emphasis on the role of history in shaping our cultural identity and the prime of belonging in a multicultural Britain.

New Historicists consider the interconnectedness that exists between literatures to be very significant in the interpretation of literary text. New Historicists stressed that this interconnection should be taken into consideration in order to explore and analyze any literary text. They have the conviction that as humans, we cannot be completely objective since we possess that biasness resulting from our cultural affiliations. As a result, they insist that history should be set in at the center of interpreting literary works rather than relying on the texts' autonomy to provide intrinsic elements through which the writer's complete meaning can be attained. Taking into consideration the doctrines of this school of thought, it is imperative that an examination of Kwei-Armah's biographical experiences enhances meaning in his two plays under study.

In an interview with "The Guardian", Kwei-Armah presented his life from birth. Born on March 24, 1967 in London, his birth name was Ian Roberts. His parents were immigrant workers from the Caribbean. His father was from Grenada while the mother was from Trinidad and Tobago. His parents worked multiple jobs to sustain the financial needs of the family. Kwame went to Barbara Speake Stage School in London. He learned how to play musical instruments at the Salvation Army Church School. He grew up in the South hall district of London. He experienced racial discrimination in his childhood. South Hall experienced an

influx of Asians and Afro Caribbean in the early years of the 1970s. The anti-immigrant sentiments in 1979. In April 1979, the South Hall riots broke out. White supremacy skinheads destroyed houses and business ventures belonging to Asians and Africans. The police arrived but did not contain the white youth. After the horrific sights of the riots, Kwame resolved to pursue his education and change the community. He became conscious of racial Intolerance in the London community.

In an interview Kwame Kwei-Armah granted to The Guardian conducted by Simon Hattenstone, he expressed his experiences that have shaped his career. While he was 12 years old in 1979, he witnessed the South Hall riots – police chasing Black and Asian boys along the streets with batons and shields followed by skinheads. Kwei-Armah in an interview with The Guardian News states:

What I have seen over the years is the rise of rage; the rise of true understanding that disparity and inequality is deeply baked into our system, and that for white horse too. (Kwei-Armah, interview)

This made him passionate about opening up pathways to drama and arts education to everyone. “Otherwise, we will suffer profoundly in the next generation”. He is now a mentor and role model for many. Dramatic scenes in Kwei-Armah’s plays have played a great role in educating blacks about their history and culture and subsequently giving them a different turn in the way they view their identity in Britain. This can be seen in *Fix Up* where Brother Kiyi’s Bookshop offers Black History books to Black Britons to inform them about their past. Kwame debuted on stage in 1993. He featured in the play *Elegies for Angels, Punks and Racing Queens*. The play was staged at the Criterion Theater. After a long acting career on the stage, Kwame went into television acting. He debuted on the BBC television on a drama called “Casualty” in 1999. He delighted his audience with his role as a paramedic on the cast. The series ran on the BBC television for five years. Kwame participated in other series like “Holby City”, “Between the lines”, and the “Bill”.

Apart from acting on television, he was also a producer of documentaries. In February 2009 he produced a documentary titled “Christianity: A history”. In this channel for documentaries, Kwame delved in the correlation between his Christian faith, and African heritage. He narrated the influence of Christianity of the early African societies like Ethiopia, Nubia, Cush and Egypt. In the following months, he produced another documentary on “Tour with the Queen”. The documentary was again aired on channel 4. Kwame explored the significance of Queen Elizabeth’s impact on the Commonwealth tour of 1953 and 1954. He became one of the few producers to document the British Queen on television. In 2011 he

worked for BBC Radio service. He hosted the musical show Desert Island Discs. Kwame capitalized on the radio opportunity to discuss the African influence on the British culture.

Kwame Kwei-Armah in a theatre interview tells Marianka Swain that Young Vic theatre is, like the rest of Britain's arts sector facing a crisis. But as a hard-wired optimist 'he is thinking positively about the future. Armah states:

You can't place blacks within the box. Might this moment be a moment of change for the arts? "I work from hope- I am an absolute hard wired optimist- so I'm always going to say 'yes'. But it won't come easily. People aren't just going to go [...] (interview)

As a playwright and a director, Kwei-Armah has written a series of plays and directed some of them. He thinks he must do something to change the mentality that as a black, you can't excel. He is thinking positively about the future. He got his fame from his play *Elmina's Kitchen* in 2003 and *Fix Up* in 2004. He was shortlisted for two awards and won the third one. Kwame again proved himself as a black conscious playwright. In 2018 Armah is made the new artistic director of the Young Vic in London. He will break the arts ceiling for African Caribbean .It's a role he has performed before in Baltimore, making theatre about police violence and experiencing the rage gripping United State. 'As a black male you are told you can't do this. I've tried to go: Yes we can....' (Kwei-Armah, interview)

As a child, he did not just face racism from white people. Lighter skin black people told him he was too dark, his nostrils too flared his lips too thick. Teachers told him the structure of his mouth stopped him from speaking properly. A female cousin told him that if he pinched his nose a few times a day, he could streamline it- after a few weeks he gave up. As a result, he started seeing himself differently. This motivated him to start tracing his origin. He changed his name from Iam Roberts to Kwame Kwei Armah when he turned 19 years. After research on his genealogical past, he traced his ancestral to Akan speaking tribes in Ghana. He adopted the Akan name Kwame Kwei-Armah. Kwame is a lover of African culture. He loves listening to Afro Caribbean and other genres of music of African origin.

Kwei-Armah's optimism and hard work has earned him a number of awards. He is winner of several films and plays award including Bafter Awards. He was head of the London School of arts for five years. In 2012 Kwame was awarded the prestigious civilian medal by the British crown. He was the recipient of the officer of order of the British Empire medal or OBE. This was in recognition of his distinguish service to the world of arts and drama. Kwame

Kwei Armah rose from the ashes of racial riots to be Britain's OBE. He has used his influence to bridge racial division in Britain. Going by Black British social and political history, he has a great influence on Black British identity formation and belonging to the British society.

Dramatic Representation of Black British Identity: (Ethnicity and Culture)

Black British Identity is the subjective or objective state of perceiving oneself as a Black British person and as relating to being Black British. Researched and discussed across a wide variety of mediums; Black British identity usually intersects with and is driven by Black African and Afro-Caribbean heritage, and association with African Diaspora and Culture.

An emergent Black British identity has been acknowledged and researched in a diverse range of forms, in scholarly or journalistic publications, and works of media. Writing within the diaspora context of both African and Afro-Caribbean heritage, academic Eddie Chambers has observed that Black British identity has evolved across decades, after the mid-century, the arrival of British subjects from former colonies, a powerful Black British identity has emerged. The question is: How did a distinct and powerful Black British identity emerge? In the 1950s, when many Caribbean migrants came to Britain, there was no such recognized entity as Black Britain; yet by the 1980s, the cultural landscape had radically changed, and a remarkable array of creative practices such as theatre, poetry, literature, music and the visual arts gave voice to striking new articulations of Black-British identity.

Kobena Mercer, a historian, in an analysis with ethno genetic similarities states that Black Britons manifested their own identity in the 1980s through activism and self-realization. Examined the conscious nature of identity in the United Kingdom and Suggested that identities are not found but made; that they are not just there waiting to be discovered in a vocabulary of nature, but that they have to be culturally and politically constructed through political antagonism and cultural struggle''. Black British Literature has been analyzed as one of the major contributions towards the emerging identity. In the 21st century novelist Diana Evans and Helen Oyeyemis impact on Black British identity has been explored in a scholarly research. Dr Charlotte Beyer has studied the concept in Andrea Levy's and Joan Riley's works. The authors, both of Jamaican ancestry have been described as two of the many authors that have been instrumental in the literary expression of identity for Black Britons.

For black artist in Britain, the division's engendered racial politics have produced long standing contortions of positive status and identity, and a legacy of disenfranchisement, which is hardly favorable to either creativity or progress. Until the late twentieth century, Black people in

Britain served as a representational presence rather than experiencing opportunities for authentic creative agency in white dominated cultural arenas. Even now, Black people's contributions to contemporary Britain's multicultural nature still chafe against monoculture experiential expectations and the fettering of work through the white male hegemony of the Britain's creative institutions.

Drama in particular, literally brings to life, and theatricalizes debates about Black people's social, cultural and national senses of belonging in a white majority context. Its live dimension directly confronts ideologically entrenched antipathies and socially enacted xerographies producing a performativity of Black cultural identity. Identity is a concept which is inter-woven with the features of an individual group of people, nations and culture. In constructing identity, some entities such as family, gender, race, history, language, behavior and social involvement are taken into consideration. Stuart Hall in his essay: "Cultural Identity and Diaspora" high lights how the formation of identity is engulfed by the dialectics of the past historical experience and the upcoming occurrence.

Cultural identity belongs to the future as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history, culture. Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation far from being eternally fixed in some essential past, they are subject to the continuous play of history Culture and power. (Hall, p. 475)

From the above quotation, it is understood that the construction of identity involves hybrids entities connected to people's past and present experiences. It tends to become instable because it is subject to be transcended within the evolving history, culture and power, identity therefore is not only engulfed by family and racial back ground, but also social background where family interact with each other.

In *Elmina's Kitchen*, Kwei-Armah Strikingly delineates the Caribbean community in Britain and highlights the distinct ways of it members to survive in the British society. As a minority group, Black British descendants are imbued with the identity which is reflected through language, arts, clothes customs, way of thinking and behavior. More specifically, the Black British identity in *Elmina's kitchen* is also marked by crime and violence. This can be substantiated in the play *Elmina's kitchen* in act one, scene one. On page eight, Digger picks out a gun, act like a criminal, and forces out money from his victims to make a living. This is because he grew up in the ghetto where life was extremely difficult in Britain. His family was

considered the less privileged since he was of the Black race. As a result he had little or no opportunity to go to school, to be well-fed, well accommodated. Poverty and hunger pushed him to crime. He learned the hard way since he was a victim of imprisonment.

Deli: you forgot I know where the butcher knife is.

Digger: pulls out his gun and points it at Deli (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p.8)

The image of the gun and butcher knife are dangerous imageries, depicting crime and violence. Furthermore, on page ten, we see Digger as a symbol of all that which is bad, aggressive, wicked, and violent. He instructs his gangster to tie up some rude boys and wait for him to come. This act of violence may be attributed to what identifies Blacks in Britain. This is a way through which they find it possible to belong or integrate into the society. It is as a result of the fact that being Black in Britain is being the less privileged, the ghetto child, slave, and the uneducated. Consequently, they tend to what will quickly give them money. This explains why Black youth in Britain go by any easy way to make wealth as reiterated by Clifton. He laments on the fact that had it been his children's right were renown as advocated by Martin Luther kings, none of them will be acting as they are doing today (criminals, thieves). Also, in *Elmina's kitchen*, violence is a glaring issue for business purpose.

Clifton: (to himself) once and man twice a child. Jesus your generation curse You British Black pick up worse and leave the best. Instead ah you pick up the English thirst for knowledge and learning pick up his nasty habit of [...] (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 90)

Deli does not pay protection money and other punks do not come to his restaurant looking for money because Digger (the bad man) is there to protect him as Deli explains to Anastasia (p.45). According to Deli, pessimism is what Black British people embrace. Deli explains to Anastasia.

Deli: Violence is a glaring issue for business purpose. Deli does not pay protection and other punks do not come looking for money because Digger is there to protect him as Deli explains to Anastasia. (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 45)

Digger is so violent, he threatens to murder or cut Tricky with his long bent blade for collecting his money and giving it to Renton crew as a gift offering. Digger wants to teach him a lesson while Deli keeps defending his restaurant from any form of immoral act. He warns Digger from discussing such a theme in his restaurant (crimes, drugs and violence) (p.49)

Black youth identity in *Elmina's kitchen* is very much influenced by the act of violence. Ashley is violent in his behavior. He thinks to beat back a person if he attacks him. He disrespects his father, he feels ashamed of his father because he can't fight back when Roy attacks him. To him, his father is not man enough to stand for his right. This is because his father had chosen not to be violent.

In the play *Fixed Up*, Youth identity is manifested through violence. This is seen in a fight between Kwesi and Carl. Carl is very mad and violent when he finds out that Kwesi and Alice are into intimacy. He throws down everything including the book shelf, confronted Kwesi and opens a fight.

Carl: (screams) touch me again and I'll kill you. You-you stolen from Kiyi

You lie to Kiyi that it is Turkish boys taking meanwhile it is you and your Somalia's. How could you do this to Kiyi after everything he has done for you? (Kwei- Armah, 2004, p. 160)

The fact that there is an open fight between Black Britons and also an attempt to kill each other identifies them as people full of violence. It may be cause by their poor educational back ground on one hand or linked to the history of slavery on the other hand.

In the cultural aspect, Paul Gilroy postulate the double consciousness and cultural inter mixture encountered by Blacks in Britain. He argues that blacks in the West stand between African cultures which are seen as black's authentic background and Western modernity. In the prologue of the play *Elmina's Kitchen*, Kwei-Armah obviously describes the Caribbean community in Britain which has particular cultural characteristics. Afro Caribbean descendant in England are still saturated by African tradition as presented in the prologue of the play:

The stage is in darkness. A single sport light slowly reveals a custom man (Digger) standing absolutely still with a gruel (a one string African guitar form for possessing the power to draw out spirits) in his hands (...) the music starts. It is a slow lament sounding concoction of American blues and traditional African music (Kwei-Armah, 2003, 203:3)

The African guitar, which is regarded as a unique and artistic instrument of the African culture, has a crucial function in constructing Black British cultural identity in Britain. This musical instrument serves to connect Black Britons within the British territory and it also creates the African arts. The traditional African music which is used to illustrate Black British action creates the impression of spectators on Afro-Caribbean disporic society. Accordingly

the formation of Black British identity can be scrutinized not only through dialogue between the characters but also through some devices such as African musical instruments and music which are employed by Kwei-Armah. Furthermore, the specific music genre narrated in this play is reggae: Baygee changes to an old time kinky reggae rhyme in which Clifton instantly recognizes it. Here, there are two Black British characters Baygee and Clifton who represent Afro-Caribbean culture. According to Gavannti, Reggae certainly has very profound roots in Jamaica, an Island nation situated in the Caribbean Sea. Reggae in this case gives paramount contribution to the construction of identity in Black British characters in *Elmina's Kitchen*.

Cultural identity in the play *Fixed Up* is manifested in the manner in which brother Kiyi keeps his hair as an African (Rasta). According to him wearing a wig like sister Norma is wearing animal's fabric. He rather affirms his identity as a Black Briton rather than forge an identity. Also, Norma talks about the desire for her husband to eat cow foot and pigs trotter. According to her, shops around do not sell home food as preferred by West Indies. They prefer selling slaves food as has been the wish of their counterparts

Norma: my grandfather use to eat cow foot and there was no slave about him!

Except maybe his name George de third! (Fix Up 108)

The above quotation goes a long way to state that people's manifestations are aspects of their culture and their culture shapes their identity. In confirmation to the fact that identity is also engulfed by social background, the setting of the play, which is Hackney London, is also important as a focal point in Black British identity formation. In this play Hackney London has been well-known for violence and crime. These are carried out by Black British gangster. This kind of social background or environment of course affects the identity formation of the people living in it. Peacock states that the identity of Afro-Caribbean Descendants in Britain, notably those who are young, is influenced by the gang and gun. Violence and crime has become the dark side of Black British life in Britain. Both the gang and gun potentially bring about virulent social disorder and causes the death of a member of the community. Violence and crime can also make the youths rude and have no respect for older people.

Kwei-Armah highlights this context by describing the setting of the play: "we are in Elmina's kitchen, a one notch- above tacky West Indian food take away restaurant in Murder Mile at Hackney London" This except suggest the situation in Hackney which seems unsafe because murder is often committed there. Armah's depiction of this dangerous place in the very beginning of the play foregrounds the rest of inter- locking events in the play which are

dominated by crime and violence. Anastasia, the waitress in Elmina's kitchen restaurant, reminds Deli about the above environment which makes people reluctant and frightened to visit the restaurant. Many people realize the bad behavior of Digger who is a gangster in Hackney and who used to have a conversation with Deli inside the restaurant. As a consequence, people do not want to buy food there because they are afraid of becoming Digger's victims. In a conversation Anastasia tells Deli that:

You supposed to clean up your environment, Deli this restaurant stinks. People walk in here, they smell Digger and walk straight back out. I've seen it but you, my friend; you are comfortable with the stench of the stench of death around you? (Kwei-Armah 43)

Anastasia suggests that Deli should make the restaurant free from Digger's presence and criminal activities. This advice is plausible in relation to the effort to attract customers to enjoy food in the restaurant. Anastasia seems to reckon that Deli will obtain success in his business if he can make the atmosphere of his restaurant and its surroundings conducive, unfortunately, until the end of the play, Deli does not succeed in resisting Digger's existence and exploitation. Digger who is explicitly called a "bad man" (Kwei-Armah 4) remains powerful and has authority to control the community. The description of the Caribbean community as depicted by Armah significantly influence the construction of the identity of characters such as Digger and Ashley as reflected in their actions pupated in Hackney London, an area which is massively occupied by Black British in London. This social environment is masterminded by violence and crime.

Furthermore, the behavior of Ashley represents the Black British youth identity in *Elmina's kitchen*. Ashley is a third generation Afro-Caribbean migrant in England who insists to indulge in Black youth culture and to oppose the elder generation. His figure is depicted in his physical appearance, the clothes he wears, and the way he behaves, signals his identity. These features however reveal the group to which he belongs and affiliates.

Ashley [...] hooded streets clothes, head phones. He has his hair in two bunches. Trousers falling off the arse. Has no respect for anyone older than himself except for Digger. (Kwei-Armah 10)

Ashley dressing and hairstyle transparently represent the casual trends and outward appearance of Afro Caribbean youths in Britain who tend to waste time outside the domestic space.

Chohan argues that such youth culture signifies the status that reclaimed cultural terrain on the street. Street culture has become an attribute of Black British identity. Wood claims that Black British cultural forms [...] have always engaged with the street, both as a sight where non-white citizens go about their everyday lives in Britain and also as a place of communal and individual resistant. However, it is important to note that street culture in relation to Ashley's life is more related to negative things as he insists to become acquainted with the member of gangster like Digger and to get himself involve in crimes and violence. Ashley respect for Digger suggest that he envies Digger's identity as a criminal and is inspired by Digger's behavior and life style. In contrast, Ashley considers his father as being conservative and unsuccessful man.

Ashley, who is basically expected to help his father to run the West Indian restaurant, ironically seems indolent and prefers to gain his own hedonistic life by joining the gangster. Ashley reluctancy to deliver the food to the customer, for instance, signals both his disrespect to Deli's command and his ignorance towards the way to which Deli tries to make his Black British Family Financially empowered through managing a small business.

Ashley kisses his teeth, grabs the TV remote off the counter, changes the channel to MTV base and attempts to sit down.

Deli: what you sitting down for? Can't you see there is ting waiting here to get delivered? [...]

Ashley (nonchalant) it's raining out there, you know. Give me a second to catch my breath. (Kwei-Armah10)

Ashley nonchalant response to Deli's statement indicates his unsympathetic behavior and lack of social responsibility. He does not want to explore Deli's attempt to develop his West Indian restaurant in order to survive in England. Ashley attitude makes Deli irritated so much such that the conflict between them comes into play. Ashley utterances, refusing Deli's instruction to deliver the food to the customer is considered impolite and rude by his father.

Deli warns him:

Deli: who you talking to like that?

Don't make me have to lick

You down you know!

Your mouth too quick these days (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 11)

It can be figured out that Deli basically expects Ashley to become a son who has respect for people. Ashley is identified by the eager desire to acquire expensive things such as BMW and the name-brand clothes, through which he wishes to achieve high social status. Accordingly, he refuses to support Deli's small business and prefers to join the gangster in order to earn much money. Ashley considers "status" and "success" as two entities which can only be measured in material things. Ashley thinks that all he wants cannot be fulfilled by his father who does not have much money. Ashley declared to Digger that: [...] this shit (restaurant) is all good for my dad, but me, I want do big things with my life, brethren. [...] (Kwei-Armah 29). This statement indicates Ashley's intension to carry out activities which are more profitable and pleasurable. Wishing to realize his ambitions, Ashley then decides to follow Digger's ways of life which are saturated by Black British crime and violence. This impression of carrying out activities which are more profitable is further reflected in the character of Kwesi in the play *Fixed up*. According to Kwesi, much money is spent on cosmetics by niggers rather than on books. This explains why he will not remain poor because he wants to follow brother Kiyi bookshop business aimed at impacting knowledge. He prefers to open a cosmetic shop that will fetch him much money. In his opinion, if Blacks get into business such as cosmetics, they will make much money, become rich and climb up the social ladder. Kiyi approaches it differently, in his opinion, even though Black Americans are poor and considered slaves, their global buying power is high and ranks eleventh in the world so Nubians are spending serious money on cosmetics rather than Education. Kiyi asked how much they spend on education. (Kwei-Armah, 2004, p. 145)

He further affirms that they spend thirty-five millions on cosmetics as Blacks thus enriching others while getting poor. He thinks the shop is good for business but Blacks are not ready. Brother Kiyi reminds Kwesi that he (kiyi) is the only nigger who runs the shop, so he knows that other niggers wanted the shop to be a "come one, come all" super market where he sells Jamaican videos, tapes, and home food but he wanted the place to be a study environment where niggers can come and acquire knowledge and get out of madness, pain, illiteracy and learn how to fight for a payback from whites slavery and manipulation. Kwesi tells Kiyi that he blames the people here who have ignored what this is all about. Why Kiyi should put himself in trouble for those who buy one book a year. But Kiyi reminds Kwesi that the road to freedom must not require so many people but a few who are determined. "Kiyi: The road to freedom is seldom walked by the multitude" (Kwei-Armah, 2004, p. 146)

On the other hand, Kwesi tells Kiyi that his road to freedom is not walked by any one of them because Kiyi is into this alone, no body supports him yet he fails to see, rather, he used emotions to express himself. There is a lesson in that for all of us.

The lesson: Sometimes you got to do stuff In this world that aren't nice but if you think that it is right; you got to do it (Kwei-Armah 146)

Therefore, it can be clearly stated that the involvement of Black British in crime has been influenced by financial problems, social environment and lack of education. Deli's inability to fulfill Ashley needs results to Ashley's decision to become a gangster so as to obtain more money, status and reputation. As a member of the minority group in Britain, Ashley basically needs social acknowledgement from his peer group. Ashley believes that Digger who has powerful authority can help him. Ashley does not care anymore about the danger and negative effects of being a bad guy who commits deprave acts.

Digger: (cool) and you wanna be the bad man? Go back to school, you and learn. You can't just walk into this bad man ting. You gotta teach the whole science of it, you step into that arena and you better be able to dance with death till it mek you dizzy. You need to have thought about, have played wit and have learnt of the possible terrible and torturous ways that death could arrive. And then ask yourself are you ready to do that and more to someone you know. Have you done that, youth?

Ashley: I stepped to you, haven't I? (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 30)

As explained by Digger, there is a big risk which a member of the gangster must encounter. Someone who wants to involve in crime must have adequate knowledge of how to make his operation successful and must fathom the strategies of how to deal with government apparatus such as the police. Accordingly, Digger asked whether Ashley is ready to involve in such a cruel life, whether he has learnt the "science of becoming a criminal". Ashley's answer indicates that he is so much committed to join the gangster even though with no skills despite the risk involved .He relies on Digger's instructions and powerful rules. Therefore Black British social environment affects Ashley's identity. Black British youth identity in *Elmina's Kitchen* rejects education. Willing to become a 'bad boy' like Digger, Ashley rejects education. He believes that formal education cannot equip him with knowledge and skills which can make his dreams come true. He confidently conveys his disinterest to education. Ashley: "I can't got time for college" (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 63)

Ashley's statement is to some extent ironical because it is widely perceived that college is a place for people to obtain academic experience, knowledge, and degree which can lead them to a better future. More importantly college provides a status with a variety of skills which can enhance their intellectuality. That notwithstanding, Ashley wants to achieve his ambitions quickly. Being acquainted with Digger, and becoming a member of the gagster, Ashley has no motivation and time to continue his study. He becomes rude and has no esteem for elder generations even to his own father. His rejection of education can be lucidly seen when he throws his college books to the bin (Kwei-Armah 63). Thus he thinks that the books are not fruitful for him. Moreover, his negative attitude towards educational institutions implies his perspective that it neither guarantee his success nor fulfills his needs.

Ashley: Forget this; college does not fit into the plans

*I have for my life, you want to keep selling you little
plantain burgers, good luck to you, may you
always be happy. Me I'm a man (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 63)*

In this regard, Ashley does not only refuse to go to college but also looks down on Deli and his business. On the other hand, Deli identifies himself with resistance to violence and he struggles for betterment. Contrary to Ashley who is totally inspired and affected by Digger's ways of life, Deli obviously resists Digger and the gangster. Deli intends to construct a new Identity by carrying out virtuous activities which do not break the law in Britain. As postulated by Stuart Hall, identity is a negotiated process which is flexible and changeable Deli negotiates his past and present identities and insists to transgress the negative stereotype of British people which is imbued with crime and violence. Instead of legitimizing and following Diggers crime affair, Deli decides to manage his legal business and create a comfortable environment. He cannot stand the malpractices of living in a bad and unsafe community. Deli: "I don't want to live like this Ashley. It isn't fun. I'm trying to change shit around here" (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 64-65)

It is worth noting that crime which has been an integral part of Black British culture still haunts Deli's life. It is evident that Deli once got involved in crime and was sent to prison. Consequently Deli finds it uneasy to construct his identity as a good man. That notwithstanding Deli strives to create a good image and redefines his identity as good man. Accordingly he insists to relinquish crimes and devoid his awful past life. He lucidly shows his reluctancy to crime by strongly rejecting to discuss criminal stuff with Digger.

Deli: Don't pollute up my vibes wid them talk dey!

Digger: [...] pollute? Deli, you went to prison for GBH on three men and their dogs, How the fuck I gonna pollute you?

Deli: (loosing it a little) a restaurant is not a place to discuss fucking murder (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 47)

In the above dialogue Deli attempts to make the restaurant salubrious by suggesting Digger to eschew talking about murder and crime in there. Deli's warning is plausible and logical indeed because the customers will become irritated and fearful if they hear such awful talk in there. The reputation of the restaurant will also be ruined if the customers know that his customers are committed to participate in criminal acts. Therefore Deli will lose trust in his customers if he doesn't resist crime.

Deli's identity formation is further engulfed by his intention to protect Ashley from violence and crime. Deli tries to become a good model for Ashley and always encourage Ashley to become a good son. Having the intension to intricate him and Ashley from the bad influence, exploitation of the gangster, Deli becomes more confrontational towards Digger. Deli warns Digger to stay away from his life and that of his son, he warns him not to recruit his son as a member of the gangster.

Deli: How much dirty youth out there you (Digger) you gonna recruit, You gonna take my son? I don't want you anywhere near anything of mine again, Digger My son, my shop, myself (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 81)

Here it is glaring that Deli considers Digger as trouble maker and a dangerous threat to his family. As an influential member of the gangster, Digger can paternally make Ashley and Deli's lives miserable. Therefore, Deli decides to confront Digger. As a protagonist in the play who valiantly resists violence, and crimes, Deli serves to deliver an important message_ which is addressed to Black British people that; involving in crime can result to tragic life. The death of Ashley because of gun short at the end of the play proves that the consequences of being a gangster and involving in crime are really saddening. What happens to Deli also haunts Kwame Kwei Armah, the author of the play. As a Black British playwright who has a family including sons, Kwei-Armah is also afraid of their involvement in crime. In an interview, Armah

confessed he wrote *Elmina's Kitchen* as a therapy for his eldest son. Apart from this confession it is worth noting that Deli's struggle to keep Ashley away from criminality indicates Deli's resistance to Black British culture of violence and crime. He insists to reverse crime and violence perpetrated by Black British youth in Britain. Kwei Armah writes exquisitely in a language that is peppery, poetic and full of wit; he articulates each theme without forcing his characters to artificially articulate. His plays are motivated by an unmistakable social imperative. He writes accurately and compassionately to describe the community around him and to be catalyst for a debate within them. His plays unfold forums of various kinds, people by characters that are both representative and questioning of social, racial and generational categories they represent.

Kwei-Armah has expanded wider stories about immigration and continent hopping musical epics but his sense of theatrical remains fixed to character and language. His characters – first, second and third generation immigrants to Britain are destabilized and even made vulnerable by their in-between cultural identities. Many of them slip between accents and idiolects-refined West Indian classic Black London.

Afro Caribbean also known as the Black British people identify themselves sometimes with a language known as creole language. This language is a mixture of Pidgin English and a couple of some Afro Caribbean languages. One of their main hindrances to communication is language barrier since they could not conveniently express themselves. Reading the Slave Narrative we come across language barrier as told to us by Mary Gould in the play *Fix Up*:

One day masser Reynolds came back from Barbados wid one highYellow gal he just buy. They say she was really pretty but I can hardly remember. But he never put she to live wid the other , no he buil she a special little house away from the quarters Down by the river which run at de back ah de plantains(Kwei-Armah, 2004, p. 132)

The above quotation exemplifies the type of language which is used to identify Blacks in Britain in general and first generation Blacks in particular. The flexibility and force of these identities are also empowering: not simply weight down by complex heritage, his characters are also bolstered and perhaps most significantly, they learn to move freely and creatively from their bearings. Nowhere is this effervescent potential as vivid as in the fast moving polyphonic language itself.

You have lost it blood, Ashley says to his father in Elmina Kitchen, who replies in a flash of temper. I am not no blood wid you. The answer comes, regrettable, that's exactly what you are. (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 27)

The kind of language spoken by Black British people is a reflection of their behavior towards each other; this aspect is what identifies them as people belonging to a particular society with a multicultural background. Language used in the texts predicts the background and class in which the characters belong. In the play *Fix Up*, Norma comes in and asks Carl:

Norma: What nastiness is that?

Carl: Sorry aunty Norma

Norma: Stop that aunty ting. People will think we is family.

Carl: But we are family! The African family. What Marcus Garvey say every black man is African nit brother Kiyi?

Norma: I am not related to no crack addict (Kwei-Armah, 2004, p. 107).

Armah offers a keen anatomy of a rarely addressed (in the theatre anyway) topic: the middle ground occupied by people of mixed race, who, in *Fix Up* are seen to speak a “half-tongue” that risk alienating them from both the cultures that gave them birth. This maybe the reason why they see themselves as the “neither- nor”. They neither speak their original language that gave them birth nor the migrant language. They are equally identified by the language they speak, Britain as a multicultural society; should help the Blacks to be identified and represented with the language they speak. This will give them a sense of belonging.

It is important to state that Kwei-Armah's *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix Up* offer a multiple perspective on the theme of identity and belonging. Kwei-Armah and other blacks in Britain are uncertain with their identity. In *Elmina's Kitchen*, Deli is caught up in a Web of misplaced identity but Digger has to remind him of his skin color and goes ahead to call him “British Black” which according to them is a derogatory word. His plays and biography is a reminder to multicultural Britain that there is need for Blacks to get their identity represented in order to give them a sense of belonging. As Kwei-Armah profoundly deals with identity issue, he has the power and craft to attract audience and make them part of the story as they identify with the characters and the situation in the play.

From the lens of New Historicism, we have examined the history of Black British people, their identity and the problem of belonging in the British society. After doing a dramatic

representation of Blacks as is the case with the two plays under study, Kwei-Armah's biography offers a great retrospection of the history of Blacks and their lives in a contemporary British society. In the analysis, the chapter has attempted to trace Black British identity in relation to its political and social history. This history has pointed out that Black British people were Africans by origin before displacement to Britain where they contributed enormously in building the British Empire. They believe they are part and parcel of the British society because they have been there before civilization. Secondly, their activities as slaves, their energy and labour put together are the reasons why Britain has emerged as a super power. This history has also traced the movement of Blacks from one society to another which has enabled them to come across a series of cultures. This has influenced their culture and shaped the identity of Black Britons. Therefore Britain should be ready to accept and celebrate difference in a multicultural Britain. From the dramatic representation of Black Britons in the texts under study, it is evident that Black Britons behave the way they do because of racism, suppression and misrepresentation, so if the Black race is represented, difference celebrated, Black people would feel the sense of belonging and will have a positive view into life unlike before. This spirit of positivism would help to eradicate crime and violence which identifies third generation Black Britons in the texts under study. More emphasis is placed on the complex nature of Black British Identity. This enhances the next chapter which is entitled: The complexity of Black British identity and the politics of belonging.

CHAPTER THREE

THE COMPLEXITY

OF

BLACK BRITISH IDENTITY

Chapter three discusses the complex nature of Black British identity. It explains that Black British people do not actually know who they are, where they belong, and where they are heading to. They are neither Africans nor British people. They see themselves as “neither nor”. The chapter further discusses the vibrancy of Black Culture and the challenges it faces at the cross- cultural level. As people of diaspora, most Black British writers have long been troubled and fascinated by the ideas of ‘home’ and ‘identity.’ A lot of their works present a sense of not belonging anywhere as a result a quest for a new kind of identity not limited to national boundaries.

The term Diaspora is defined as ‘the displacement of people across the world under different circumstances or forms of compulsion. This displacement has led to the birth of Black British literature or ‘literature written in English by Caribbean, Asian, African, and other people who originated from the ex-British Empire. Black British literature is influential for introducing the complexity of life and cultural fragmentation experienced by the black diaspora in Britain. Often written in the form of dramatic move from one nation to another, from one culture to another, with no clear sense of “home” and “abroad”, Black British literature predominantly portrays how the disruption of the notion of ‘homeland’ results in the problematic concept of Black British cultural and national identity. Such issues are portrayed most clearly in Kwame Kwei-Armah’s plays where the protagonist’s conception of ‘home’ and ‘identity’ is disrupted

between Ghanaian and British and how he ends up tracing his roots back to Africa yet he cannot let go his British identity .

Bronwyn T. Williams's essay "A State of Perpetual Wandering: Diaspora and Black British Writers" states that:

"Black British writers, especially the younger generation share a similar sense of not belonging either in Britain or their country of origin". (Williams 1999, 1)

As quoted above, this dilemma is very glaring in the identity problem of blacks living in Britain as portrayed in characters' trait in the plays *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix Up*. On page 91 of *Elmina's Kitchen*, Clifton wants his family in Britain to go back home (Africa) and settle on the land that they bought so that they can do business. He wants his people back home to know that he is a proud man despite his hopelessness in Britain.

Clifton: You and your brother bought some land home! You got some money hidden away I know. Let's go back home together na? Open a little something in town, show them bitches that Clifton can bounce back, Clifton have something, his children amount to something you know, they does laugh at me home? Yes your own uncle laughed at me (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 90)

In the same vein, the celebrated British-Caribbean novelist, Caryl Phillips, has admitted that She has always been quite envious of people who have talked about "going home". It would be nice to feel a sense of belonging somewhere while Sunetra Gupta in her Article "The Art of the Self: Identity and Performance" underlines the impossibility of ever finding 'home 'when he states:

I think one has to be comfortable with the notion that one has one's own cultural identity and that one doesn't necessarily have to be at "home" ... I think we have to accept that we are going to be perpetually wandering. '(Gupta, 2021)

Williams argues that in their state of 'perpetual wandering,' Black British writers are enabled and forced 'to create identities that defy the borders of the modern construct. Sandra Liliva explains that in their case, identities are no longer defined by national boundaries which, according to Benedict Anderson's theory "Imagined Communities", are created through 'one particular aspect of European culture, the printing press and its associated social, economic,

and cultural practices. Anderson believes the printing technology has spread a sense of nationhood, which is core to one's identity. Yet, contemporary Black British writers apparently no longer associate identities with nationalism but with 'new, more fluid, transnational and transcultural forces.

In Stuart Hall's words, 'Diaspora identities are those which are constantly producing and reproducing themselves anew, through transformation and differences. *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix Up* are plays that reflect on the notion of not belonging and on the formation of the new 'nationless' identity. These plays are a demonstration of the lives of Blacks living in London who are forced to question their identity and where they actually belong.

The Politics of Race and Belonging in Britain

At the Cumberland lodge conference of November 2018, *Inequality, Identity and Belonging* draws on the wisdom and experience of an interdisciplinary representation of academics, policy makers, business leaders, Non-Governmental Organisation (NGOs), community practitioners and activists, and young people from across the United Kingdom. It offers a unique insight into current thinking and best practice, and a series of practical, policy-focused recommendations for promoting progress towards more peaceful, open and inclusive societies. Going by Contemporary identities, Living in the United Nations (UK) transforms identities for all, but the patterns and directions of such change can vary amongst minority groups. Identity formation is influenced by multiple factors, including local neighborhoods, national discourses around race and British identity, government policy, and transnational connections and ethnic histories as is the case in Armah's *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix Up*. In broad terms, there are important patterns of generational shift: first generation immigrants retain the strongest ties to places of origin, whilst later generations take more creative approaches to reimagining their identity. Such creativity can generate new forms of opening an inclusion, as well as modes of closure, or even fundamentalism.

Identities respond to policy incentives in certain cases, the allocation of community funding or the dynamics of electoral politics can work to frame identities in fixed and competitive terms. In many cases, minority group identities do not fit neatly within a pre-given set of cultural boundaries. Instead, they are fluid and dynamic, combining elements from different dimensions of experience such as schools, homes, popular culture and tradition taking different forms in different contexts. This can be substantiated in the character of Clifton, Deli

and Ashley in *Elmina's Kitchen*. Diverse minority communities are often united by shared experiences, such as those relating to policing or income inequality. However, no encompassing political framework, equivalent to political blackness, currently exist. The efforts and concerns of different minority communities can be prone to divergence. At a national level, education and the telling of national history remain two key areas in which inclusion remains uncertain and contested.

Given the above, Policy recommendations are made and the following are observed: Policy makers and other leaders should be pragmatic in identifying persistent inequality and determine with a view to their audience, whether the language of race and/or racism is productive. Efforts to improve race disparities need to start from a systematic perspective, highlighting long-term and large-scale patterns. Responses to such disparities need to take place on a similar level. Prejudicial beliefs may often intertwine with legitimate hardships. Effective mediation and multi-dimensional approaches to problem-solving are required to address this. Inequality and discrimination, in particular, are often interconnected, but nonetheless distinct challenges. When working with minority communities, a pluralist approach is needed: no single voice or organization should be taken uncritically to 'represent' a community. Patterns of inequality and discrimination are often embedded in majority cultures, institutions and structures, and should not just be left to minority groups to resolve. Effective change can result from a focus on existing common values and a shared sense of belonging, rather than from narratives of division or conflict. Community-based approaches require robust support and mediation or facilitation, as well as sufficient time to develop meaningful relationships. Representation at a national level, and in foundational stories of British identity, plays a crucial role in shaping perceptions of who can claim to belong in the United Kingdom, and thus ought to be taken seriously in policy, education and other interventions.

As far as African diasporic identity is concerned, there is the desperate need for the construction and reconstruction of more peaceful open and inclusive society. Kwame Kwei-Armah being an African diasporic practitioner that he is, and a first Black general dramatist in Britain, recognizes the role and the importance of theatre as a site and instrument for the articulation and contestation of Black British identity and the politics of belonging in Britain particularly when it has to do with aspects of race and ethnicity. Kwei-Armah's work like that of other African diasporic writers is marked by the continuous battle of recognition,

representation, equality, acceptance and inclusion. Kwei-Armah deems it necessary to get the Black race and cultural identity represented in the community and also feels it is important to understand the people with whom you share the community. Patricia Cumper shares the same view with Kwei-Armah when she states in an interview with Kene Igweonu that:

A lot of time people from minorities know the majority better than they know themselves, because we have to live with them, but what we (people from minorities) also know is ourselves (in what ways people from the minority does not know us). (Igweonu, interview)

Popular understandings of the nature and significance of 'race' and pattern of inequality and exclusion affecting minority groups have transformed over the years. Whilst overtly racist attitudes have become unacceptable for the majority of Britons, people in minority groups still report experiences of discrimination. This is coupled with less overt forms of prejudice, which often take structural, unconscious or institutional forms, and sustain unequal outcomes. In the play *Fix UP*, Brother Kiyi has always been so concerned with historical books because it brings to mind memories of the history of black slavery. Blacks have been brought to Britain and America as slaves but after their liberation, their present and past represent nothing to the white race. This explains why he stands his grounds to educate the youth about their history and what the Black race represent in Britain. Iris Marion Young's book titled *Justice and the politics of Difference* states that: "The concept of oppression is central to the discourse of the contemporary emancipatory social movements" [...] (Marion, p. 9).

From the quotation we understand that our contemporary societies are multicultural and that in these multicultural societies, minority social and cultural groups are often oppressed by mainstream culture. She further explains that the oppression of other social and cultural groups is as a result of denial of difference. When people refuse to recognize and accept the differences that exist between them and other social groups and cultures, they turn to oppress them. Enduring inequality is challenged locally where new forms of identity and belonging takes shape, cutting across barriers as well as nationality, through initiatives such as the Government's Race Disparity Audit, and through challenging conversations on the nature of 'Britishness'.

Changing histories of race, inequality and belonging, Migration to the UK has a long history, and many minority communities have settled in the UK long before the Windrush generation. Colonial connections, policies and legacies continue to play a significant role in UK immigration patterns. From the 1960s to the 1980s, a shared identity of ‘political blackness’ helped activists and scholars to identify prejudice and exclusion experienced by minority communities. In the 1980s, there was a shift to understanding diversity in terms of ‘culture’ rather than ‘race’. However, popular ideas of minority cultures continued to present certain characteristics as innate, sustaining forms of discrimination that had been previously expressed in the language of race. This shift highlighted supposed cultural differences that distinguished minority communities, and thus challenged the idea of an encompassing political blackness.

In November 13, 2013, the then home secretary, David Blunkett, talking to BBC Radio Sheffield, argued that:

The arrival of a large number of Slova Roma migrants would lead to rioting and that their behavior was “aggravating” to local people. He said: You’ve got to adhere to our standards and to our way of behaving and if you do this you’ll get welcome. We have got to change the behaviour and the culture of the incoming community, the Roma community, because there’s going to be an explosion otherwise. (The Guardian, November 14, 2013)

From the above argument, Blacks in the diaspora are obliged to go by the British acculturation policy in order to belong. Minority cultures continue to sustain forms of discrimination that had been previously expressed in the language of race. Armah’s play *Elmina’s Kitchen* is a full demonstration of this kind of discrimination which is expressed in the language of race. Deli does everything possible to copy the white ways by not practicing crime and violence. He went as far as reporting Digger to the police on issues of the “Renton attack”. His son Ashley is not happy with him for his action. Being a purely Black play, most characters are poor, prisoners, illiterates and criminals. This happens as a result of discrimination against the Black race. Blacks are seen as slaves in Britain thus are not given equal opportunities to excel like their white counterparts. Consequently they resort to crime and violence in order to survive as testified by Ashley who is one of the Black British youth in *Elmina’s Kitchen*. Ashley: (shocked to his core) “Nooo! You can’t have done dat? You’re...

He does what he has done to survive” (Elmina 92). It is because of this discrimination that has paved the way for poor behavior and subsequent exclusion of Blacks from Britain and the end is racism.

These heralded already the kind of arguments promoted in Brexit campaign in 2016, although in this campaign, migration was being disassociated from racism and “control of ‘our’ borders” was regarded as a rational response to the perceived national threat posed by migration. Anti-migration and racism are clearly linked, however. Following on from Blunkett, , Nick Clegg, the then deputy prime minister stated: “We have every right to say if you are in Britain and are coming to live here ... you have got to be sensitive to the way of life in this country”.

Jack Straw, another former home secretary subsequently intervened by calling the opening up of Britain’s borders to eastern European migrant a “spectacular mistake.” David Cameron, the then prime minister, followed this up by saying that we welcomed the right kinds of migrant like businessmen and medical personnel who contributed to British society. In this discussion, and the commentaries that have followed (as well as within the more recent focus on migration before and after the Brexit referendum of 2016), the boundaries of belonging and conceptions about the undesirable elements in society were flagged again, with the targets being the Roma and East Europeans rather than Muslims or black Commonwealth migrant, both targets in the past and continuing ones. Since then the argument that has prevailed in Brexit Britain is that we are not anti immigration as such but that we need to “reclaim our borders” so we can control who enters. While this is supposedly not racist or xenophobic and people who voted for Brexit disclaim any such characterization on the whole, there have been a number of effects. Firstly, racism has come in through the back door as it has become legitimate to want to decide who comes in and who stays out and to talk openly of migrants as undesirable, with racialization effects. It has become legitimate to castigate the “outsider” who does not fully belong.

From the words of Nick Clegg, Jack Straw and David Cameron, identity and belonging in Britain has long been on the platform of differentiation as can be seen on the discriminative lifestyle between white and black race in Britain before Brexit. Blacks in *Elmina’s Kitchen* are not integrated in the British society.

Going by the words of peter Brown in his review of *Elmina’s Kitchen* he states:

I went back to Yorkshire a few months ago to see my mom. I want her to move but she won't. The area is terrible now. I won't go out after 8pm when I am there (Brown in a review)

The above speech is a confirmation of what Kwei-Armah tries to expose in *Elmina's Kitchen*. Huddersfield in Yorkshire is inhabited by Black Britons. Due to exclusion and abandonment, they are left to strive for existence by themselves. The failure to give the Black race the sense of belonging in Britain at the very beginning is the root cause of the challenges posed in a contemporary multicultural Britain.

Even though Britain targeted Roma and East Europeans and not Muslims and black common wealth migrants, it is glaring that racism has come in and has become legitimate since it is legitimate to castigate out sidlers who do not belong. In this regard Blacks living in Britain are faced with migration Challenges thus the impossibility to be accepted and integrated. Caught in the web, Blacks living in Britain turn to question their origin and the notion of home. According to Sura P. Rath in his essay "Home(s)/ Abroad: Diasporic Identities in Third Spaces" states that:

The notion of home generally has a strong link with the political nation/state where one originates because nationality serves as the starting point for 'the domicile family condition of belonging. (Rath, 2000, p.1)

This explains the reason why people of the diaspora are compelled to preserve their original culture, the imagination of homeland and the sense of tradition in the new place. It is none other than their attempt to secure 'the nostalgia for an "irrecoverable" original history/tradition' or in a simpler term, to have a home and to belong. Kwame Kwei-Armah thinks as a Black you are not part of the British society. In his mother's eyes, Kwei-Armah who changed his name from Ian Roberts (British name) to Kwame Kwei-Armah (Ghanain name) in an attempt to trace his origin and home at the age of 19, having researched something of the family's likely slave history, would have been a lawyer. He recalls the first time she told him of that ambition when he states in an interview with The Guardian by Tim Adams on Sunday second of February 2014 at 08:01 GMT

My younger brother was in our house once in Southall, aged 12 or 13, and the police kicked down our front door and my brother flew back about 10 feet, his mouth was all cut. The police ran upstairs to my father's room, he had never been in trouble with the law in his life and they broke open his wardrobe, scattered everything. That kind of raid happened maybe eight times in my growing up. [...] (Adams, the Guardian)

Unfortunately, though Kwei-Armah wanted to be an R&B singer, an ambition he pursued until he was 26 and started to write in earnest. It wasn't until his mother saw his plays, he says, "and saw that I was advocating on behalf of black British people in perhaps a different way that she was: OK, I get it." You imagine she would have been proud of his current direction, and wondering when he might get back home. He has no real answer to the latter question, beyond the fact that for all its frustrations, he misses Britain, though not the sense of *deja vu*.

In truth, my kids are there and the messages that I get back are relatively despairing in terms of prospects for young people. And when I read about politics it's this same old Tory overemphasis on benefits and immigration again. Listening to things like the Mark Duggan inquiry sounded at this distance very much like the language you used to hear about such things in the 1980s. (Adams The Guardian)

He has noticed a change though, which he welcomes. He gets to read a lot of new plays from young Black playwrights starting out in their 20s. "The great thing about the writing is that these kids are enjoying being political again. Five years ago, in Britain, you would not hear about Blacks participation in the politics of belonging. Back then young people just seemed to enjoy being apolitical and making money. That's gone. The influence of Black British playwrights such as Kwame Kwei-Armah, Bola Agbaje and Roy Williams and their plays have paved a way for Black British youth to aspire to be somewhere and positively represented despite all the differentiation and marginalization inflicted by the white race. Race in Britain is one of the four key issues that Cumberland Lodge addressed in its 2018-19 series on Identities & Belonging. We look forward to seeing how it inspires positive action to tackle the causes and effects of social division across society, at a local and national level

According to Dr Farhan Samanani a Research Associate (specialist in the study of grassroots community building) in the Cumberland lodge of 2018 and 2019 report on identity and race, he states that:

Out of the terms we use to talk about identity including 'race', 'ethnicity', 'gender' and 'identity' itself, Race conjures a vision of a particularity fixed and innate sort of difference. However, race is very much a socially constructed and contested identity, given different meanings at different times Tracing the ways in which changing ideas of race have set the terms of belonging for minority groups in the UK throughout history, It examines how such ideas of race have been challenged in the hopes of making

society more equal, and how race is reimagined today in ways that continue to pose ongoing challenges [...] (Samani, p. 1)

Following the Cumberland Lodge, it can be seen that a lot of efforts has been made by the British government to identity and belonging in Britain but a lot of controversies is still manifested. Black Britons are still politically, socially and economically excluded in Britain. This falls in line with the cry of Black British playwrights who finds it hard integrating the Black race in Britain. Questions about the place of diversity in British society have acquired a new urgency, not least in light of the vote to leave the European Union. In the year that followed the Brexit referendum, reported hate crimes rose by 29%, prompting fears that the vote had given new license to simmering feelings of racial resentment (Achieme 2018).

There are numerous examples of recent cases in which victims were abused for being ‘illegal’ or told to ‘go home’, regardless of their citizenship status. The beliefs that underlie these incidents of hate crime that it is possible to tell whether someone is ‘truly’ British on the basis of superficial. It is sometimes argued that ‘race’ has an objective reality in referring to genetically distinct groups. However, actual patterns of global genetic similarity and difference not only map poorly onto commonly named racial groupings, but also frequently suggest that genetic groups cannot be thought of as closed or distinct, given the range of genetic variation and the high degree of overlap with other populations found within many groups (Benn Torres et al 2008; Bryc et al 2015; Rosenberg et al 2002; Tishkoff and Kidd 2004).

Markers such as skin-colour, ethnic dressing and accent alone reveal the enduring power of racial thinking in society today. In 2019, hate crimes in the UK rose to record levels, with the largest proportion of these being motivated by race (BBC 2019). 'Questions about the place of diversity in Britain have acquired a new urgency, not least in light of the vote to leave the European Union.' Yet race is not the only lens through which minorities in Britain have been understood. As migrants from across the world have come to settle in Britain, and as communities, policymakers and popular sentiment have adapted to their presence, a range of competing discourse have emerged to characterize diversity in different ways. Cosmopolitanism, multiculturalism, tolerance and nativism are just a few of the prevalent discourse for understanding and discussing diversity in Britain. These discussions exist alongside one another and grapple for public prominence, in part because they speak to different experiences and address different issues around diversity. Alongside the challenges already faced by minorities in cultivating a sense of belonging in Britain, the white-British majority have to rethink its identity and institutions in relation to diversity. Different discourses

offer majorities and minorities, alike, a range of resources which can be used to grapple with these challenges. In turn, as particular discourses gain prominence, they help to shape broader social outcomes, such as inequalities in sentencing within the justice system, or enduring pay gaps between majority and minority communities.

With reference to Kwame Kwei Armah's plays under study, Black skin colour in Britain is an impediment to their progress. On page 120 of *Fix Up*, we are told that Michael Jackson was a member of a Militant Black Organization for ten years but changed the colour of his skin from black to white. This is because Blacks were seen as a minority and could not belong in a predominantly white world. Kwesi sees Michael Jackson as a prominent manifestation of Black self-hate.

Brother Kiyi: Hey, I just read that Michael Jackson has been a sign-up member of the Nation of Islam for ten years?

Kwesi: How can you have the most prominent manifestation of Black self-hate as the member of Militant Black Organization char! Michael Jackson should have been shot (Kwei-Armah, 2004, p. 120)

Furthermore, Black British ethnic dressing is a marker of racism in Britain. It should be noted that most of the adjectives in *Elmina's Kitchen* are directed towards African- American cultural artifacts. The play presents and respects the Black African ways of life and the qualities this culture can present including their dressing habits. Even though the playwright presents and respects these ways of life, there is no character in *Elmina's Kitchen* who actually dresses and showcases this culture of dressing. Most of the characters' dressing code reflects the white British ways of dressing. Failure to dress in Britain as Africans or Afro-Caribbean is a clear indication that the Black race and all that which makes up black culture is not accepted nor integrated in Britain.

Also in the play *Fix Up*, most of the characters abandon their culture and pursue the British Culture in order to get a sense of belonging. We are told that much money is spent on cosmetics rather than on education by the Black race. These cosmetics include; Chinese human hair, body lotions, sprays and all sort of make-ups. This is to enable them look like white so as to bridge the gap of racism. Kwesi confirms this on page 161 when he states:

Kwesi: They wanna party and look good, have the best hair style, and nails and tattoos. That's where niggers be at, Kiyi? They ain't spending shit in here. Why

should the other man take our money? That's why we are powerless cos we ain't where the money at (Kwei-Armah, 2004, p. 161)

Adding to the above, black British accent is not welcome in Britain. Since they are people who have moved from one cultural heritage to another, their accent is a combination of Pidgin English and a variety of native languages in what is described as creolization. In order to be part of the British society, you are obliged to learn the Queen's language. Any Black accent is not considered in Britain as a language use for communication. In the play *Elmina's Kitchen*, Digger mocks at Black Britons for rejecting their culture and embracing the white culture including language.

Digger: Oh, it's alright for you to use all manner of Viking expels, expels, swear word, but as soon as the mother fulker uses language of our heritage, you start to cuss. That is why I call you British Black (Kwei-Armah, 2004, p. 10)

The word "British Black" is symbolic of identity crisis. Digger sees dual identity as a problem since Deli does not accept the language of his heritage but prefers to speak the British language. Even though he admires the British language and speaks it in order to belong, he is not fully accepted in Britain because of racism. White Britons see Black British culture as inferior and backward. This has brought about inferiority complex in the lives of Black Britons. The fact that they are not fully accepted has brought about the question of identity and belonging.

Chris Weedon in his article titled "Identity and Belonging in Contemporary Black British Writing" observes that:

Identity is an important issue in contemporary Britain where there are ongoing struggles to redefine both "Britishness" and the nature of a desirable, culturally diverse society. The factors that have influenced this debate include migration, devolution, globalization, the empire, Britain's long-term decline as a world power, the development of a widespread moral and cultural pluralism, and an increasing degree of integration with Europe for Black people in Britain, [...] (Weedon, 74)

The above complexity brought about by identity problem has made it difficult to identify who is British and who is not. Mass influx of immigrants into Britain has created a diverse society. This has eventually led to cultural pluralism in which in a single society we

encounter different cultures that coexist but this cultural coexistence is barred by racism which is a hindrance to British multicultural society.

The Vibrancy of Black Culture and Cross Cultural Challenges

Black Britons have suffered discrimination and suppression from white Britons in Britain. As a result of this, second and third generations of Black Britons become uncertain about who they are and what cultural value they should uphold in a country with very complex cultural landscape. Cultural diversity has impacted the lives of many Blacks living in Britain since they stand in-between Black culture and multiple cultures due to the presence of immigrants from different parts of the world. The presence of multiple cultures has posed untold challenges to Black culture in an attempt to practice cultural co-existence.

Orlando Patterson in his article “Understanding Black Youth: Its Cultural Vibrancy and its challenges states that:

There is no such thing as black culture. The black population is remarkable for the heterogeneity of its cultures. And most of those cultures are fine, 80 percent are either middle class or working class. In fact, often they are very conservative in some of their values ... However there is also street culture even though the minority of African-Americans identify with the street culture which is violent [...] (Patterson, p. 1)

Black Culture is a combination of multiple cultures from one cultural heritage to another. Moving from Africa to America and to Britain as Afro- Caribbean, they cannot boast of Black culture without having to talk about mix culture. In the play *Elmina's Kitchen*, the prologue in act one scene one is a stage play in which the performance is a concoction of African traditional music and American blues. This is to let us know that what we call Black Culture is not black culture but mix cultures which reflect the history of Afro Caribbean people. On page 50-52 of *Elmina's Kitchen*, we hear voices on stage singing slow blues called “You Gotta Move” while the light turn slowly off and on again, we see the characters at Dougie’s funeral. Set to the side is a lone female figure in a traditional African headgear playing the gurkel (Act two). Like the adage goes “All that which is Black is African” Black Culture is symbolic of African life style since the roots and base of Afro-Caribbean culture is traced back to Africa. On page 53 of *Elmina's Kitchen*, we have two generations of Afro-Caribbean. The first and second generation Blacks representing Clifton and Deli respectively. They both have contrasting ideas. Deli will like some moral etiquette during their opening night party to celebrate their new West Indian Restaurant well as his father (Clifton) thinks that during a party

as such they are free to dance, sing and make merry and not the idea that they should stand up and chat. Clifton wants that they should embrace and practice the Black culture.

Furthermore, in order to lift up Black culture, Clifton tells Deli that it is in the African Cultural Norms that children should respect and take care of their parents when they grow up just like the father did to the child while they were young. Deli reminds his father that he (Clifton) did that to a point. His father is angry and tells him that you Black British youth always go for negative things from the white British. Instead of you to pick up English thirst for knowledge and learning; you pick up their dirty habits of dumping their old people in some stinking hole for them to rot there when there are at the prime of their wisdom.

Clifton: (to himself) once and man, twice a child. Jesus! Your generation curse. You British Blacks pick up worse and leave best. Instead ah you pick up the English thirst for knowledge and learning, you pick up his nasty habit of dumping their old people in some stinking hole for them to rot when they are at the prime of their wisdom (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 90)

From the above quotation, it can be said that Black Culture stands between foreign culture and home culture since Black British youth do not actually know where they belong. Their cultural identity is a combination of African, American and British ways of life. In most cases they derail from both cultures and form their own culture which is that of crime and violence as clearly seen in the play *Elmina's Kitchen*. On page 91 of *Elmina's Kitchen*, Clifton is angry and thinks he is not a happy father because his children have all failed him. They have copied the English dirty ways and forget to go by their own culture. He is not a proud father, he fails to convince Deli to go home (Africa) and make a life. He places a curse on the generation of Black British and promises them "they got to rot". Clifton: Get off me .All you generation curse. You got to rot. Mark my words (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 91)

Eventhough Black Britons try to fake out white ways of life; Black culture remains outstanding even till the end of the play *Elminas's Kitchen*. This is evident in the case of Deli, his skin and original identity pins him down despite all efforts to behave like a white Briton. After his encounter on page 95(an open confrontation with Digger), the violent Ragga music at the end of the play takes us back to Africa thus African culture and history.

Deli: Kneels, still, by his dead son. After a few beats he rises, takes the jacket that Anastasia left for Ashley and covers his body and head. With one final glance around, he stares at the picture of his mother, and then walks out of the restaurant. The violent Ragga tune plays as we fades to black (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p 95)

In the play *Fix Up*, there is no certainty about Black Culture in Britain. The different hairdo by characters in *Fix Up* is seen in their mixed feelings about both cultures. While brother Kiyi keeps his hair (Rasta) as an African, Sister Norma keeps alien hair which is a symbol of escapism. She escapes from her African identity to British identity. The culture of “rastafera” is what identifies Blacks in Britain. Also, it is normal for Black to eat cow and pig trotters and foot. Sister Norma talks about the desire of her husband to eat cow trotters but the white British see it as slave food and will not like to sell it.

Norma: Sex init! No hard yard food. He wants me to run out the road to buy some cow foot and pig trotters. I know you don't like me to buy from them people next door but Dongal and dem is the only place man could find a decent home food. Not one of them Black shop close to me have anything to make old West Indian happy.

Brother Kiyi: That they don't sell that kinda slave food is what makes these West Indians happy.

Norma: My grandfather use to eat cow foot and there was nothing slave about him! Except may be him name George de Third (Kwei-Armah, 2004, p.108)

From the above quotation, it is normal as the culture of Black people to eat cow foot and cow trotters and not what their white brothers and third generation Blacks in Britain believe and call it slaves' food. Adding to the above, the history of the Black is cultured by subjugation of women by men. Alice tells brother Kiyi that he should teach Carle poetry but it should be a “less sexiast poet”. That is a poet that does not exclude women from participating. The theme of feminism is introduced because Alice represents women emancipation. She wants to stand out for women whose rights are limited but contemporary Black British women have copied the culture of white women thus tend to implement. It should be noted that, the culture of Black people in Britain has been masterminded by violence and crime due to inability for them to get integrated and represented in the society; they tend to create a negative identity that defines them as the marginalized and rejected race. It is because of this that Blacks are constantly chased by the police in Britain.

Just like Orlando Patterson says in his article “Understanding Black Youth”: It’s Cultural Vibrancy and Its Challenges:

There is no doubt that we have a serious institutional problem with the police, and that has to change, Patterson said. One way or another, we have to terms with the fact that the inner city is plagued by chronic violence. It's partly cultural and it's partly social. But cultures can change. (Patterson,p. 2)

Patterson advocates for a change of this kind of culture of violence demonstrated by Black Britons. But note should be taken that the Culture of violence practiced by Black Britons may be alluded to the history of slavery and slave trade and subsequent discrimination, marginalization, rejection, suppression and misrepresentation of Black British by white British.

In Kwei-Armah’s two plays under study, characters find it difficult to take a stand as to where they belong at the cross cultural level. The fact that contemporary Britain is endowed with multiple cultures, both majority and minority race in Britain faces challenges integrating both cultures in a multicultural society like Britain.

Panikos Panayi in his article titled: “Multicultural Britain: a very Brief History” observes that:

In the past decade Muslims have become the main out group in British xenophobic discourse. The origin of their marginalization lies in the Iranian Revolution which began to impact upon immigration discourse following the Rushdie Affair [...] (Panayi, p. 5)

Judging from the above quotation, it can be said that cultural differences and cultural co-existence has greatly influenced crisis in religious institutions. Muslims versus Christian wars in the world today come as a result of cultural integration. Since the Muslim world does not welcome the Christian culture and they see their religious practices as satanic they find it difficult co-existing under the term Multiculturalism.

The arrival of the Windrush Empire from the Caribbean heralded the start of modern migration to Britain, and ever since, there has been a persistent debate about the place of ‘otherness’ within British society. This debate is ongoing and becoming increasingly complex, as it reflects a growing range of experiences, issues and perspectives. ‘Diversity’ no longer holds a single or unambiguous meaning for the British public. Today, many British citizens

consider it to be both a source of national strength and pride, as well as a persistent challenge. In Elmina's Kitchen, Digger listens to the news reader which reads:

Newsreader: The headlines. As the case of John and Peter the Goodyear enters its filth day at the old Bailey the brothers go on records saying, they murdered their parents "for the hell of it». We talk to Denton Philips the Jamaican gangstar, or yardie, brought to Britain by the metropolitan police to supposedly help in the fight against crime. And thirty-five million pounds of personal assets were seized from celebrated Ranter frontman [...] (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 20)

Bailey: (conversationally) my grandfather use to say when a black man tief one man cry, when the European them tief, the whole continent bawl (holding up the rum glass to Deli) Give me one last quick one (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 21)

In the above quotation, it can be seen that the migration of Afro Caribbean into Britain has not been welcome by White Britons. They do not want to integrate them into their society. They are regarded as "others" and all crimes and violence committed and acted respectively are attributed to them. If Denton Philips the Jamaican gangstar is brought to Britain by the Metropolitan police, it is because they wanted him to help fight against crimes. It is crystal clear that white Britons push away Black Britons but are in need of their services. Note should be taken as quoted by Bailey that white Britons are celebrated for committing crimes but turn to rebuke their Black counterparts on the same issues. Racism in Britain is one of the main challenges of a peaceful coexistence. Since the Black race is not accepted, their culture too is not accepted thus the impossibility of harmonizing a multicultural society like Britain. This racial practices started far back as history will point out:

Contested histories of Migration in Britain is closely entangled with Britain's imperial and political history, with the roots of contemporary migration dynamics often reaching back hundreds of years. Migrants have always faced discrimination and prejudice, although the extents of these attitudes, and the ways in which they are expressed and justified have changed throughout the years. In the decades following World War II, beliefs in the innate racial or spiritual inferiority of migrants gave way to attitudes that targeted the cultures and beliefs of migrants instead, often treating these as fixed characteristics.

In the play *Fix Up*, characters have this to say about their presence and misrepresentation in Britain

Brother Kiyi: In 1899 a group of social anthropologists went across the entire West Indies- British, French, Spanish, Dutch,- and interviewed the last

remaining beings that were enslaved, two thousand three hundred Africans that were between the ages of five and twenty five when slavery was abolished. Most of them old like so-um. But this is bondage brother... (Kwei-Armah, 2004, p. 106)

*Carl: Raises his eyes and smile at the word "bondage"
'Bondage', oh yeah?*

Brother Kiyi: This is the institution that brought us here, Carl, spoken about written down in their own words, their dialect. That's always been the problem with slavery, see... we have been able to witness other people talking about their genocide, but ours has been confined saccharine American sagas or puerile political statements by people who don't give a blast about we (Armah 106)

Carl: I don't know the fuck you are talking about.

Brother Kiyi: (Catches himself about to preach) At last, this is the human connection Carl. Maybe if more of the youth could hear, see where they'd have a little bit more respect for where they are. (Kwei-Armah, 2004, p. 107)

According to Brother Kiyi, if Black Britons are informed about their past and the fact that they have moved as slaves to Britain and other parts of the world, they will not accept subjugation and cultural oppression but will practice and showcase their culture rather than copying the white culture as is the case in contemporary Britain.

In respond to these discriminatory experiences, migrants have adopted a range of strategies that have likewise transformed over time. These range from a close reliance on existing networks of family and friends, to the cultivation of common 'non-white' political identities, to the active embracing of diverse cultural identities as part of a multicultural nation. In this regard, the play *Fix Up* presents a character who embraces diverse cultural identity by wanting to know his original cultural identity after a long period of practicing foreign culture.

Alice: It's Black History month, isn't it?

Brother Kiyi: Indeed it is.

Alice: Must be a good time for business eh? Bet everyone like me comes in looking in looking for something that will broaden their understanding of, well, black history. What do you recommend?

Brother Kiyi: Well, young lady...

Alice: I don't know about the young, according to my mother, at thirty I should have been married at least once and had my own one point-six children years ago.

Brother Kiyi: It's a very Caribbean thing to say, that's all. My mother had me when she was twenty- seven and I am the last of the six. (Kwei-Armah, 2004, p. 113)

From the above dialogue, it is evident that Brother kiyi's bookshop is put in place to educate the black race about their culture. This can be seen through Alice who wants brother Kiyi to recommend a book for her that will help her know more about black culture. Celebrating the Black History month, she thinks business in Kiyi's bookshop will boom. Alice sees her real self contrary to what her mother told her about Black people. In respect to the culture of Black people she is normally supposed to be married with six children at the age of thirty- four that she is. Due to the fact that she is caught up between white and black culture she is still single but wants to know more about black history. This has paved the way for the teaching of Black History to immigrant blacks in Britain so as to get them inform.

From early migration to Windrush Migration in Britain is often discussed and presented as a post-war phenomenon, sparked by the arrival of Commonwealth migrants (Naidoo 1998). This contributes to the enduring perception that Britain is not traditionally a nation of immigrants (Baucom 1999; Cesarani 1992; Jones et al. 2017). It is true that, following World War II, migration to Britain not only increased significantly but also became more diverse, in terms of where migrants originated from. However, migration has always been a significant feature of British history, from the early arrival of the Celts, to that of the Romans, Anglo-Saxons and Normans in subsequent eras. Although there is evidence that African soldiers were present as part of Roman rule in Britain, the earliest substantial records of non-white migrants emerged in the 16th Century. These people were often former slaves of other nations or from the start of the British slave trade in 1562 of Britain itself. Other early migrants were brought to Britain as interpreters, domestic servants or prostitutes. Their presence was often seen as a threat to British public order, as evidenced by two campaigns led by Queen Elizabeth I to round up and deport 'diverse blackmoors brought into this realme' at the end of the 1500s (Innes, 2000: 8).

In the play *Elmina's Kitchen*, Anastasia tells her son that she walks into a restaurant named after a slave castle but could not see the castle. If Black culture is discriminated against in Britain today it is traced back to the culture of immigrant slaves, domestic servants, prostitutes and interpreters. This culture has greatly influenced the identity formation of Black Britons. Originally, their culture was wiped out and they were introduced to European culture

in which they were not still part of the culture. In the play *Fix Up*, Kwesi and Brother Kiyi asked Carl to join them in the Match for people's right to be repaid for slavery

Kwesi: Hey, Brother Carl, are you coming for the Match?

Carl: I am not your brother, and which Match is that?

Kwesi: The reparation for slavery match (Kwei-Armah, 2004, p. 121)

As a result of this misplaced identity, Black Britons are caught up in the damages caused to them by slave trade and slavery and will like their white counterparts to pay for these damages and reinstate the Black Culture of decency as was the case before slavery, slave trade and colonialism.

Humera Iqbal in her PhD thesis titled *Parenting and Child Development in Multicultural Ethnic Britain: A Study of British Indian, British Pakistani and non-immigrant White Families Living in the UK* states that "The study of intercultural relations [...] focuses on the psychological processes and outcomes that arise from the contact of cultural groups and their individual members" (Iqbal 40). It aims at understanding how people of different Cultural groups negotiate their lives while living together in culturally plural societies. Theatre space, particularly within postmodern thinking offers a unique platform upon which the complexities of Cultural diversity, identity and belonging can be portrayed. Some critics hold that throughout the history of Britain, foreigners have always felt unsafe in Britain.

Thomas Hylland Eriksen is one of those who hold this opinion about Britain ever being insecure for people of foreign cultures. This view is expressed in his article titled "Two tales of cultural diversity" when he says:

Britain thus has a long history of cultural diversity, but also of oppression and subjugation, racism and discrimination. Norway, by contrast was for centuries economically marginal, thinly populated and mostly ethnically homogeneous except in the far North. Only since around 1970 have substantial numbers of non-European migrants begun to arrive in the country in search of work. Protection, love or the mixture of the three (Hylland, p. 3)

Other early immigrant groups met with different reactions. For example, Protestant Huguenots fleeing persecution in France in the mid-1600s were widely welcomed, in particular for the wealth and valuable artisanal skills that many of them possessed. Whilst 16th-century, working-class arrivals from Ireland were often stereotyped as 'criminals', their wealthier or

aristocratic compatriots were often incorporated into the upper echelons of British society (Crymble, 2018; Ohlmeyer, 2012). There is also evidence of Gypsies living in Britain from as early as 1567. For centuries, Romani migrants worked as travelling farm labourers and traders, and were often treated as indispensable, even though they were met with mistrust and hostility for their itinerant way of life. As British global influence grew in subsequent centuries, and the British Empire expanded, patterns of immigration to Britain increasingly came to be shaped by relations of trade, politics and empire. In turn, these patterns helped to shape migration into the 20th Century

Even though these migrants were indispensable, most of them were treated as strangers and were never integrated into their society. The identity formation of these immigrants became complex. They saw themselves as neither Africans nor British. In the play *Fix Up*, Michael Jackson had to bleach the colour of his skin in order to gain fame as a popular Black musician of his time. Since Blacks were not accepted as part and parcel of Britain. The white race saw the Black race as a threat to their culture. All that was Black was suppressed and prohibited such as the teaching of Black history in schools.

Kwesi: How can you have the most prominent manifestation of Black self-hate as a member of militant Black organization? Char! Michael should have been shot the moment he bleached his skin (Kwei-Armah, 2004, p. 120)

British attitudes toward race and belonging vary across time, and views depend on how questions are framed. For example, more people will express support for multiculturalism but fewer will agree that diversity has strengthened British culture, while a majority of people reject overt racism; many still identify tension between diversity and supposed British identity. Explicit forms of racism have declined, but significant challenges remain around forms of structural and institutional racism and unconscious bias.

Digger: Born as a sufferer, grow up as a sufferer, fe-mek it as a sufferer, fight a sufferer, survive as a sufferer, move amongst the ghetto ah most ah them ah sufferer ah!, etc etc (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 6)

Digger sees the Black race in Britain as the most marginalized and discriminated race. He mocks at Deli and his cousin for showing great admiration for the white culture despite their predicaments and challenges faced as a result of racism from the white British. Digger believes the fact that they are Blacks; they can never achieve anything good from Britain apart from being classified as second class citizens.

Digger: See you. You coming just like your cousin Sofie, a rhated English man

Deli: Please explain to me how my female cousin, can be a white man?

Digger: You know what I mean, she love too much blasted English man(shaking his head). You British Blacks (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 7)

Digger and Deli have contradictory views on Black British identity and its practices. Digger who is considered as the bad man does not abide to the British white ways. He believes in the ghetto ways to make it possible in life. In this, he picks up the gun, behaves like a criminal and forces money from his victims to make it possible in life. He identifies himself with crime and violence because it is what he has been pushed to do since he is a born Black in Britain. On the other hand, Deli is in a state of confusion. He finds it difficult identifying himself. He knows very well that he is of the Black origin, he tries everything possible to fit himself in the British society by following the white norms but racism does not permit him to integrate.

Public opinion is shaped by competing discourses on, and visions of the concept of race. These include: racism, cosmopolitanism, multiculturalism, hybridity, conviviality, tolerance, utilitarianism, communitarianism, color-blindness, nativism, localism, and post-imperial nostalgia. Practices of key institutions, such as the police, hospitals, schools, local government and community organizations, play a critical role in issues of inequality and feelings of belonging. There are major disparities amongst ethnic groups in terms of key social outcomes, including housing, health, education and access to justice. These disparities exist on a national level, and point to systematic challenges.

In the play *Elmina's Kitchen*, Clifton tells stories to his companions and brings in the theme of West Indian Education. He asks Ashley about him going to school but he says, No! Clifton is surprised and asked him if he wants to be a bad man (gangstar) rather than study science and become renowned. To him Ghandi gives inspiration and Martin Luther King's talks about Civil Rights- equal rights which means women, blacks none of them will be standing on the soil they are standing today.

Clifton:[...]who is reputed to be Ghandhi's direct inspiration? And without Gandhi, you have no Martin Luther Kings and without no MLK, you have no civil rights and without civil rights, you have no equal rights which means women, blacks, none of us would be standing on the soil we do today(Kwei-Armah,2003 p. 37)

On the same note, in the play *Fix Up*, Brother Kiyi loans books and not sell them because he thinks that if he sells them people will not buy and they will not be informed about their culture and history since Black History is not taught in schools. While Sister Norma rejects education, Alice and Carl want to be educated through Brother Kiyi's bookshop.

Carl: Come on, Brother Kiyi, let's get down to it. I have n't got long! (Showing off)

Excuse us. Brother teaches me to read, see, I ain't one of those ignorant niggers.

Brother Kiyi: (referring to niggers) Carl!

Carl: Sorry-Nubians, that's afraid of edgedumacation (Kwei-Armah, 2004, p. 122)

From the above dialogue, we are taken back to the history of blacks which is presented through illiteracy. Originally blacks were illiterates before being moved from Africa to the New World and to Britain. The culture of illiteracy remains in them despite all attempts by their failure brothers to impart knowledge in them. They find it difficult integrating the white culture of literacy and accepting education becomes a problem especially in a society like Britain where Blacks are marginalized. This explains why most blacks in the plays under study are illiterates and do not embrace education as a way forward. This is a big challenge to multicultural integration in Britain since illiteracy has paved a way for inferiority complex.

Also, gender inequality is one of the challenges to multicultural integration in Britain. The culture of Black Britons is that which exclude women in education and politics. This contradicts white culture in which both men and women are equal to the task. This explains why in the play *Fix Up*, Alice tells Brother Kiyi to teach Carl a less sexiest poem(a poem that does not exclude women from participating in the struggle (*Fix Up*125) well as Brother Kiyi is anti- feminist because he thinks he cannot spend his money on women because he has nothing to do with them but Normar reminds him that the only excuse she can get from him not paying his rent is when he spends all his money on women and only women will bury him when he dies, satisfy him on bed of which books and history cannot do that (*FixUp* 109). In a preparatory match for the reparation for slavery, Brother Kiyi invites men and do not involve women. Black culture does not actually involve women in politics and education and this explains why most Black women in Britain turned out as servants and do all forms of menial jobs even in this twenty first century well as white women in Britain are quickly integrated into that society.

Local neighborhoods can play an important role in challenging exclusion, but robust institutional support at the local level is also necessary. People within minority groups often have high levels of belief in the capacity of people from different backgrounds to get along, and express a strong sense of belonging both to local areas and to the UK. Whilst this reveals significant potential for engagement, minorities often also feel that the UK does not present them with fair opportunities. Brother Kiyi in this case is responsible for the role to challenge the exclusion of Black History thought in schools. Within the Black community, he opens a Black Bookshop aimed at teaching Black history to Black Britons. This will enable them to know where they are coming from and where they are heading to.

It's Thursday, late afternoon in early October-Black History Month. Outside is well cold! We are in Fix Up, a small old-school, Black conscious bookstore. The place is much too small to hold the many shelves and book cases that jam and squeeze up next to each other. However, although at first sight the shop looks chaotic, with no subject labels or even indicators, to the trained eye it is perfectly arranged[...Kwei-Armah, 2004 p. 1)

Residential and educational segregation has generally been on the decline, but persists in certain areas. Residential patterns are influenced by networks of support and the distribution of resources, and factors of segregation are often intertwined with those of inequality. In the case of *Elmina's Kitchen*, Blacks live in Huddles field in Yorkshire London. The area is highly habilitated by Blacks. It is a ghetto and full of crimes. Digger's social environment has greatly shaped and influenced his identity as a hardened criminal.

Digger: (shout out) Never! I was born in Grenada and I've lived in jail house all over the world. I know who the fuck I am, don't you ever include me in all you stupidity. (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 17)

Digger's behavior is influenced by segregation from the British government. Blacks are abandoned to themselves and they live in ghetto houses under very poor and unbearable conditions. This has pushed Digger to crime and violence. These crime and violence is what identifies Black youth in Britain. This is a big challenge to Multicultural integration since the white consider the ways of life of Black Britons as a threat to mainstream culture.

Diversity has also generated significant creativity. New identities and modes of belonging have taken shape in response to the challenges faced by both minorities and majorities. For example, certain neighborhoods have come to be marked by rich local traditions of co-operation or openness, which transcend the confines of popular discourses around racial or cultural boundaries. Else where, segregation has deepened, as minorities have shunned

difficult encounters with the majority, or as white British citizens have fled diversifying neighborhoods. In both cases, new identities have been shaped as life in Britain has transformed and been transformed by various minority groups. All the while, on the national stage, new conversations have opened up around what it means to be British in relation to enduring questions of race, ethnicity and diversity.

The theme of witchcraft remains a point to ponder in British multicultural co-existence. On page 40 of *Elmina's Kitchen* Clifton and Baygee discusses that Old Macknee the old Scottish man should have been termed bewitched if he was an African. This is because he drinks to stupor, misbehaves irresponsibly yet the British society does not see anything wrong in him. If he was African, he should have been termed bewitched. But Clifton thinks the most witchcraft is practiced by white men if not so, he doubts how they managed to take African from them. Baygee: If he was West Indian, I'd say some bod wok obea him. Clifton: Is only Black People that know witch craft. (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 40)

The question of witchcraft is regarded as an aspect of African Culture. The British government attributes witchcraft to the Black race. Even the black race attributes all that which is bad as being caused by witchcraft well as the white race thinks science and natural causes can explain all misfortunes. The question is does multicultural coexistence accept the myth behind witchcraft as they themselves are considered witches and wizards or they are still against the African believe in witchcraft yet a call for multicultural co-existence.

Summarily, this chapter has attempted to explain the complexity of Black British Identity under which it targets the politics of race and belonging, the vibrancy of Black British identity and its challenges at a cross cultural level. This is analyzed in respect to Kwame Kwei-Armah's Plays *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix UP*. The political and cultural landscape of contemporary Britain is unaccommodating for Black British Cultural identity and the politics of race and belonging remains a question of home or abroad in Kwei-Armah's plays under study. This chapter also explains Britain's attempt to effect multicultural co-existence but the influence of racism, cultural subjugation, exclusion and discrimination stands out as a barrier. Britain's attempt to propagate multicultural integration in order to create a level ground for equal representation of other cultures to integrate in a contemporary globalized world has proven ineffective. Thus Black British cultural identity and belonging in a multicultural Britain remains a call for concern to Black British playwrights and the world at large. The best way to get the Black race recognized and represented in Britain is for Britain to accept and celebrate

difference most importantly cultural differences. Therefore there is the need for multicultural intergration. This brings us us to the next chapter captioned Cultural Hegemony Multicultural Integration.

CHAPTER FOUR

CULTURAL HEGEMONY

AND

MULTICULTURAL INTEGRATION

This chapter attempts an investigation of how British Cultural conservatism dissipates other cultures rendering Multicultural Integration in Britain, especially Black British culture difficult. It attempts to explain that British Cultural Conservatism which imposes cultural hegemony on alien cultures renders multicultural integration in Britain especially Black British Culture difficult. The chapter examines various factors that propagate British Cultural Hegemony including Cultural Conservation and the challenges it imposes on Multicultural Integration, it denounces cultural domination and racism which has been practiced by the white Britons over the years. Black Britons have proven that they are caught inbetween cultures and cannot freely go by the culture that identifies them because Britains' cultural conservatism on alien cultures has rendered multicultural intergration difficult.

From the lens of cultural studies, Scholars such as Stuart Hall, Richard Haggard and Raymond Williams, have viewed Cultural Studies as an interdisciplinary field, concerned with the role of social institution in the shaping of cultures. According to these scholars, Cultural Studies is a well-established field in many academic institutions, and it has since had a broad influence on sociology, anthropology, historiography, literary criticism, philosophy and art criticism. Among its central concerns are the place of race or ethnicity, class, and gender in the production of cultural knowledge. Cultural Studies views cultures not as fixed bounded stable and discrete entities but rather as constant interacting and changing sets of practices. Focus here is on literally cricism which is aimed at analysing the place of culture in Black British identity and belonging in Britain.

In *Migrating to the Movies: Cinema and Black urban Modernity*; Jacqueline Stewart provides the first major study of African Americans and early films. Jacqueline Stewart main focus is on how the first major waves of Black Northern migration not only recognized America's civics life but also its media institutions and visual culture. Black film culture, Stewarts argues that it was actually part of the development of America's national film culture. If we read the making of Black film culture, as a migration narrative, Stewart writes.

An important part of the story is how migration of blackness into dominant cinematic imagination reflected and affected larger black efforts to move out of traditional restricted roles (Steward, p. 15).

It is worth noting that Black British people are people of multicultural background who traced their origin from the era of migration and were moved to different parts of the world such as America and the West Indies before actually settling in Britain. This movement have impacted their culture in so many ways, as a consequent they find it difficult identifying themselves.

According to Andrew Milner, Cultural Studies emerged as one of the most significant academic growth Industries during the last decade. It now has separate courses or departments in every continent but Antarctica, if not it would have been quite a genuinely global movement. Simon During says cultural studies has none the less grown into a putatively international discipline ,with a serious intellectual presence ,stretching beyond Europe , the America and Australia , into India, Taiwan and south Korea for all this apparent ambiquity ,the term cultural studies remains an annually polygenic sign (Cultural Studies having multiple meaning). At one level of course, its meaning is obvious:

Cultural Studies are the academic study of culture. The problem however is that there is absolutely no agreement to what we mean by culture. The latter is one of the most widely used abstract movies in the lexicon. People worry about the independence of their national culture, but also about whether they are sufficiently cultured as individuals to get on in life. They worry about the possibility and the desirability of living in a multicultural Society. Economics and politicians wonder about the "culture industries" and the prospects of "culture-led" economic recovery. The odd thing about these worries however, is that each is worryingly ambiguous. When people think of an independent national culture, they might have in mind distinctive arts as embodied both in individual words and in institutes such as art galleries and Opera houses but they might also be thinking more generally about their destructive national ways of doing things: Their cuisine and their eating habits, their religion and their sports. To

be “cultured” might mean the ability to spot intersexual references to T.S Eliot; but it might also mean the capacity to affect an upper class accent.

Multiculturalism might mean more immigrant literature in schools or more foreign films on public television; but it might also mean significant modifications to those distinctive national ways of doing things. The problem is that we all mean a great deal more than we know. Kwame Kwei-Armah in his plays under study based his facts on these numerous diversities of the different ways in which different people, institutions and society perceive culture. Culture is also seen as sociology of adolescent gang warfare and the anthropology of kinship. This is seen in the character of Digger in *Elmina's Kitchen*. Digger is that character who always identifies himself with warfare in order to have his way through. He stands for Black youth identity in the play, he would not let go his culture in order to practice white culture. To him, as a Black in London, he has gone through thick and thins (slavery, slave trade, imprisonments, tortured and warfare) in which it is all reflected in Black culture in Britain. This is seen on page 10 of the play whereby he vehemently rejects the white culture. He further threatens to tie, beat, and kill any fellow who dares him.

Digger: oh, it's alright for you to use all manner of VikingExpels, expels, expel, swear Word, but as soon as the Mother fucker uses Languages Of our heritage Start to cuss. That is why I call you British Black. (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 10)

He is further identified with the culture of gang warfare;

(...) tie him up, wait for me

Digger: I buck him with me pistol.

Who the hell you take me for, Rodent? (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p.10)

His behaviour is influenced by his past experiences as a Black living in Britain, Raymond Williams the Welsh cultural theorist and late professor of drama at Cambridge University famously described culture as one of the two or three most complicated words in English language that complexity is nowhere more apparent than in his own attempts to define its usage. In his first major works titled “Culture and Society”, he drew attention to four important kinds of meaning that are attached to the word:

An individual habit of mind, the state of intellectual development of a white society, the arts, and the whole way of life of a group of people.in the late keywords, only the latter usages remained in play (Williams, 1963, p.16) (Williams, 1976, p.80)

From the above definitions of culture, we are made to understand that there is complexity in defining the term culture, that notwithstanding, culture can be defined as an individual habit of mind, the state of intellectual development of a whole society, the arts and the whole way of life of a group of people. When we talk of the whole way of life of the people, we mean a wide range of things, such as; dressing, language behaviour, arts, theatre, literature, worship food, a people's content that culture is what distinguishes one group of people from another. This definition also gives the impression that people's culture can undergo a change with the influence of time. Culture may undergo change as a result of its exposure to other cultures in order to meet up with modern realities. This is the case with contemporary Britain. Black culture has been influenced by other foreign cultures and modern civilization. Britain's modernism has dominated and oppressed Black culture due to Britain's cultural conservatism.

Probagation of Cultural Hegemony

In our modern era, most Direct Colonialism has been terminated, while dominance is still in its place just as we see. It exists as specific political, ideological, economic and social practice. Culture dominance is the continuation of modern colonialism in Cultural Field. Its purpose is not to conquer territory, nor is to control the economic field; it is to change relationship between two countries. In the background of economic globalization, with the dipping of cultural exchanges between countries, the emergence of cultural globalization is a threat but it is not real equal exchange among countries around the world. It is cultural hegemony swayed by cultural dominance, which shows the dominance of strong culture over weak culture.

In the plays *Elmina Kitchen* and *Fix Up*, Black culture is dominated by white culture. Black culture is seen as primitive and savage while white culture is considered advance and modern. In *Elmina's Kitchen*, the prologue introduced a costumed man in darkness standing firm with a gorkel famous in the possession of power to draw up spirits in his hands. This depicts aspects of Black culture. Also the image of the man in darkness is a symbol of savagery, backwardness and despair in which the white race qualifies Black culture. The mixture of African traditional music and American blues makes us to understand that Black British people are caught in-between dual identities which are their original Black identity and their foreign identity as has been shaped by foreign culture through which they have come across even with the prevalence of cultural hegemony.

Acustomed man in darkness standing absolutely still with a gurkel (a one- string African guitar) famed for possessing the power of drawing up spirits in his hands (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 1)

In Marxist philosophy, Cultural Hegemony is the domination of culturally diverse society by the ruling class which manipulates the culture of that society, the beliefs and explanations, perceptions and values so that the imposed ruling class world views become the acceptable cultural norm, the universal valid dominant ideology, which justifies the social political, economic status quo as natural and inevitable, perpetual and beneficial for every social class rather than as artificial social constructs that benefits only the ruling class.

In 1848, Karl Max proposed that economic recessions and practical contradiction of a capitalist economy would provoke the working class to proletarian revolution, depose capitalism, and restructure social institutions [...] (Max, p. 10)

In the above proposition, Karl max sees capitalism as an ideology which influences cultural Hegemony since the ruling class dominates, and for this reason there is the need to depose capitalism and restructure social institutions per rational model of socialism, this will bring about change because the didactical changes to the functioning of the economy of the society determines its social super structure which includes culture and politics.

In line with the above, Britain as a culturally diverse society is a capitalist society that promotes cultural hegemony. In the play *Fix Up* by Kwei-Armah, Alice thinks brother Kwesi is a little racist that is the white race against the black race. To this effect, brother Kiyi picks up the dictionary and defines “Racism” as the feeling of superiority from one race to another”. He thinks blacks are not racist because they are not economically superior. The ideology of superiority is what gives cultural hegemony a chance for the white race in Britain to see their culture as superior to that of the Black race.

The influence of capitalism on cultural Hegemony in Britain is further explained by Brother Kiyi. According to him, he loans books and not sells them because if he does not loan them the books will not be read and people will not be informed. Brother Kiyi explains that as he sells books, the best books bought last year were *Black Mum Kissing Black Dad*, *Shorter’s Revenge* and *Oh’ Black Love*. This means that the British society does not encourage books that can bring knowledge of Black Civilization such as books by Chancellor Williams, Capitalism and slavery. Instead people come to buy nonsensical books. He tells Alice that she is the first person in her age to buy a book of substance that can impact knowledge in this present society taking into consideration their predicaments. In Britain, Cultural Hegemony is

accentuated by capitalism which does not give Black Britons the opportunity to empower themselves by getting knowledge about who they are, where they are coming from and where they are going to. They are victims of acculturation. Rather than going by their culture and getting themselves integrated in the British society they are acculturated.

Antonio Gramsci's distinction between the war of position and the war of maneuver is not far from what Kwei-Armah demonstrates in his play *Fix Up*. The Blacks in Britain who stand to represent the proletariat class are against the White Britons who represent the capitalist class and are held responsible for practicing Cultural Hegemony. Kwesi and Brother Kiyi persuade Carl to join in the reparation for slavery Match. Brother Kiyi starts by teaching Carl how to read black history books. Alice proposes poetry books but less sexist poems (poems that do not discriminate women or exclude women from participating in the struggle). Historically alluding Claude, the father of the Harlem Renaissance, the poet quoted by Winston Churchill to the British soldiers before the Battle of Britain. Brother Kiyi points out the poet because he wants to prepare his participants' minds for the resistant, war, or match they intend to carry out. Should it be the Black Britons succeed in their match, their citizenship in Britain will be recognized not as slaves but as people with equal status with the white race. This will put an end to cultural hegemony in a multicultural Britain.

Blacks in Britain represent the proletariat or the working class whose culture is misrepresented and dominated by the white culture which is considered as a leading culture. Looking at the characters in *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix Up*, we can see that they do menial jobs such as restaurant business and bookshop business. They are limited in scope thus remain at the level of working class. They are recognized as slaves, house maids, yard boys and butchers. Not being able to stand out as the bourgeoisie or represented in the ruling class, they are hence dominated in socio cultural activities. It is therefore imperative for them to create their own working class culture. This culture is what is reflected in their daily activities in relation to what identifies them. The question here is: Can they belong to the British society and get themselves represented through this culture? The answer to this question would have been "yes" if and only if Britain could stop the practice of cultural Hegemony.

In every society, cultural hegemony is neither a monolithic intellectual praxis, nor a unified system of values, but a complex stratified social structures, where in each social and economic class is a social purpose and an intellectual class logic that allows its members to behave in a way that is particular and different from the behaviors of members of other society,

class, while co-existing with them as contingents of the society. The concept of cultural hegemony in Britain is a reflection of what Karl Max and Antonio Gramsci advocates in their school of thought as a result of Britains' cultural conservatism cultural hegemony is imposed on alien cultures which renders multicultural integration in Britain difficult.

Going by the term, "cultural conservatism" Allan Bloom wrote in "The Closing of the American Mind: a Condemnation of the Failure of Liberal American University System", its criticism of social movements in the United State has strong cultural conservatism overtones. Bloom espoused that modern cultural conservation has staged from the simple anti-liberalization of society. According to Marcus Hawkins, cultural conservation of today hold fast to traditional ways of thinking even in the fall of movement change. They believe strongly in traditional values, traditional politics and often have a sense of nationalism. It is in this area of traditional values that cultural conservation most overlaps with social conservation. Cultural conservatives are often accused of racism, even though their flaws may be more xenophobic than racist.

It is evident from the above explanation that contemporary British society finds it very difficult to practice cultural integration in a multicultural Britain. This situation is very glaring in Kwei-Armah's two plays under study. Due to cultural conservatism, Black Britons in *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix Up* are dominated upon by their white British brothers. The cultural values of the white Britons are uplifted at the detriment of the Black's and Asian's cultural values.

In *Elmina's kitchen* Deli explains to Anastasia that:

Deli: we have entered a stranger's dream and for trespassing he has rewarded us with his worst nightmares, is what my father use to say about living in English (Kwei-Armah, 2003, P.46)

This is in line with Cultural Conservatism in which racism and xenophobia are the watch words for a conservative society such as Britain, not wanting to integrate other Cultures into their Culture, they see foreign or strange Culture as alien cultures, and as a result they discriminate, resist and even kill Black people so as to conserve their culture.

Kwesi: The only thing this world understands is "power". Till we have, no matter what is up, there (pointing to the head) we are just joking

Brother Kiyi: Good talk Kwesi but make sure your word don't take you were there should not, jail life Na nice! (Kwei-Armah, 2004, P.120)

This is in accordance with Cultural and Social Hegemony in Britain. In the Play *Fix Up*, Black British people cannot speak up freely. They are dominated and deprived of human rights. Power is in the hands of white Britons. Black Britons are poor, have no voice and are intimidated and thrown into jail in case they seek to analyze the society. Brother Kiyi wants to impact knowledge into the brains of his Black Britons but cannot openly run his bookshop for fear of going against the conservative norms of the Britain that prohibits Black history from being taught in school. According to Raymond Williams in *Marxism and Literature* he says Hegemony is a practical issue.

Raymond William states that:

[...] Hegemony is a body of practices and expectations regarding the whole of life. Our senses and energy define perceptions we have of ourselves and our world. It is a vivid system of meanings and values. To the extent there are experienced as practices [...] (Williams, p. 109)

The above quotation is related to what practically goes on in a contemporary multi-Cultural Britain. The practice of domination and subordination by the ruling class constitute lived experiences, a sense of reality for most people in the society, a sense of absolute because experienced reality beyond which it is very difficult for most members of the society to move in most areas of their lives. In Britain, white culture is dominant over black culture. In *Fix Up*, niggers do not want to read books but want to party and look good, have the best hair style and nails and tattoos. According to Kiyi selling Afro-sheen will not give respect to niggers but Kwesi thinks that it will bring money that will empower them to buy more shops and before you know it niggers will own everywhere and will no longer be dominated by their white counterpart but will be respected. To him, business with high income will give him position.

[...] they wanna party and look good, have the best style and tattoos. That's where niggers be at, Kiyi? They aint spending shit in here. Why should the other man take our money? That's why we are powerless .That's why we are powerless cos we aint where the money is (Kwei-Armah, 2004 p. 161)

This is evident in Britain in the sense that Blacks have experienced poverty; this has rendered them powerless thus they remain servants while the whites are masters. This has greatly influenced their culture; they turn around to copy the dominant culture of the white British such as dressing, eating habits, behavior, language and accent. These practical issues emanates from governance which is a factor that propagates British Cultural Hegemony

including Cultural Conservatism. In all of this, the state plays a great role in influencing cultural Hegemony.

“The Transnational Historical Materialist School” sees the state as important component of hegemonic order but associates hegemony with the economic, political and social structures that facilitate particular patterns of production within the world economy. These world order functions via the propagation of rules and norms, many of which are given legitimacy through international organization and institutions and of which the most crucial tend to govern the conduct of monetary and trade relations. Associating Hegemony in the cultural order as per the context of this study, Cultural Hegemony in Multicultural Britain is instituted as a result of governance. In an attempt to safeguard the mainstream culture in Britain from being uttered by immigrant culture, the ruling class in Britain promotes cultural Conservatism in the course of governing the society.

According to Richard Huff in SAGE Publication Encyclopedia of Governance, Govern mentality is an approach to the study of power that emphasize the governing of people’s conduct through positive means rather than the sovereign power to formulate the law. In contrast to disciplinarian form of power, govern mentality is generally associated with the willing participation of the governed. The concept of govern mentality takes the definition of government as the exercise of organized political power by a nation or state and expands it to include the active consent and willingness of individual to participate in their own governance. It proposes that government by the state is only one form of governing, that the term state and those actions taken by the state alone cannot bring above its desired ends. In line with the above concept, the government of Britain in its constitutional amendment of July 2007 which was presented by Hon Jack Straw (Secretary of State for Justice and Lord Chancellor) states that:

In Britain, our constitution has evolved organically to renew the relationship between government and citizen, and to respond to the challenges we have faced as a nation. It is from this constant evolution that we draw strength. In 1997 the Government embarked upon a major programme of constitutional change: power was devolved away from Westminster, fundamental rights were enshrined in the Human Rights Act, and freedom of information was [...] (5)

In respect to the words of Jack Straw, the ruling class is seen to have practiced cultural conservatism in Britain. The active participation of Black Britons in the process of acculturation promotes mainstream culture at the detriment of immigrant culture. This practice enhances the growth of white culture and the end result is cultural domination. Through the

years, this cultural conservatism has been a great challenge to multicultural intergration. In the play *Elmina's Kitchen* Clifton reminds Deli that Black British youth always go for negative things from the White British. Instead for them to pick up the English thirst for knowledge and learning; they pick up nasty habit of dumping their old people in some stinking hole for them to rot when they are at the prime of their wisdom.

Clifton: Once and man twice a child. Jesus. Your generation curse. You British Blacks pick up worse and leave the best. Instead of you pick up the English thirst for knowledge and learning pick up nasty habit of [...] (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p.90)

In the above, acculturation has wiped out Black culture in Britain. In an attempt to copy the white ways, they let go what actually defines them as blacks. The act of hospitality, humility, communal life style is thrown away as lamented by Clifford. This gives rise to dominant culture thus cultural hegemony.

Govern mentality, an expression originally formulated by the 20th century French philosopher Michel Foucault, combine the terms government and rationality. Government in this sense refers to the conduct or an activity meant to shape, guide or affect the conduct of people. Conduct talks on meaning beyond the form of leading and directing. It also refers to the “conduct of oneself” where a sense of self-governance is a guiding force. . Rationality, as a form of thinking that strives to be systematic and clear about how things are or ought to be, suggests that before people or things can be controlled or managed, they must first be defined. Therefore the state designs a system for defining population which makes it known and visible. They include mechanisms of management and administration (work processes, procedures, and rules) and ways of classifying industries or groups (by income, race, professional and personnel categories), which allows for identification, classification, ordering, and control. The above concept of govern mentality is reflected in the constitutional amendment of 2007 in Britain as stated by Hon Jack Straw.

[...] So far, we have explored how the key institutions of our democracy, Government and Parliament, should be renewed to invigorate them. From the UK and its institutions we draw our national identity: a far less tangible – yet equally important – element of our society. (181) Identity is important because it shapes people's sense of self. Some components of our identity are given to us and are matters of fact. But others are the subject of at least a degree of choice: [...] (Straw, p. 53)

Reading through 2007 constitutional amendment as stated above, the British government reiterates the importance of identity formation in relation to the history of the people. The influence of identity on education, geography, ethnicity, family, politics and origin are huge thus warrants an effective recognition of individuals identity for a proper governance in Britain. But this attempt proves abortive in the sense that this identity formation does not focus on immigrant identity but are more concerned with the mainstream identity formation. They rather promote and represent white British identity at the detriment of Black Britons thus racism and the domination of Black cultural heritage which shapes and determines their identity. As a result, it is difficult for Britain to construct a multicultural Britain or celebrate difference in culture.

In the play *Fix Up*, Brother Kiyi sells black history books to enable blacks know about their history in order to identify themselves but the British Government does not encourage the teaching of black history in British schools. This is a form of cultural domination. This domination is further seen in rationality as a form of governance in Britain. Rationality as a form of governance in Britain is reflected in the system through which population is defined. This is to enable the government to be able to control or manage the population. In the course of doing this, the white majority become outstanding in almost all aspects of life while the black minority face domination including cultural domination from the white majority. The recognition of national identity that they can all hold together, the overarching factor, British citizenship that brings the nation together. This will enable Britain to promote and safeguard mainstream culture at the detriment of immigrant culture that defines their identity. This therefore poses a problem to multicultural intergration.

The case of Sister Norma and Brother Kiyi in the play *Fix Up* is clear. Classifying into Personal Category, her personality is forged to reflect who actually she is not. On page 137 Norma wears a long wig on her head. Brother Kiyi is surprised with her wig because he believes she is a Black British and laughs at her for wearing animal fabric. She tells brother Kiyi that it is human fabric, Chinese made. According to her she wants to go into politics. She is going to stand for elections since she is called Madame by the Head of the Council. In this regard, Cultural Hegemony is seen in the aspect that Norma wants to change her physical look, copy the white British dressing code (culture) which will make her eligible for the task. She aspires to go far into politics but the fact that she is a Black British poses a problem. Her culture is not represented and she feels that copying and practicing the white culture will enable her to belong and become a full British citizen. In this regard, rationality as a form of governance had

influenced their way of thinking. They believe that black culture is inferior. Therefore she needs to dress and behave like the whites in order to belong and participate in socio-political affairs of Britain. This is a big challenge to multicultural intergration.

Governmentality views power as productive. In this perspective, the objectives of power relations take on three forms fundamental to modern authority. Sovereign power is viewed as exercising authority over subjects within a territory or state (taxing laws) disciplinary power is seen as regulating the ordering of people within a territory (schools, military work) and government is concerned with the capacities and relations between people as resources to be fostered and optimized. In a contemporary Britain, the government is concerned about regulating the capacities and relations between people as resources to be fostered and optimized. This is not what is actually practiced in a multicultural Britain. Most of the norms guiding governance in Britain are in favor of nationals in Britain most specifically white British nationals and not the entire British citizens. Below are some of these norms as instituted in a constitutional amendment of 1997 in Britain

In a constitutional amendment of 2007 Hon Jack Straw states that:

In every generation of our country's life, the relationship between the individual and the state, the rights and responsibilities of each and the role of our public institutions have been the subject of review, debate and reform. (Straw, p. 96)

Sometimes these reforms have been evolutionary, with the gradual development of new ways of working and new relationships. Sometimes it has required a step of change through legislation. Sometimes it has taken the form of revolution. But together, these reforms have developed this country from a feudal monarchy where the King's word was law and only a tiny minority had any real influence, to a representative democracy governed through a sovereign Parliament elected by universal suffrage. Alongside the growth of Parliament, we have seen the development of our common law, which for centuries has underpinned many of our most cherished rights and freedoms. The pace of change has varied, but it has always been achieved through a process of discussion, and by combining an enduring respect for the value of tradition with a determination to change when change is needed. Box one gives a brief history of Britain's constitutional development. This Government is proud to play a key role in continuing this process of constitutional renewal. We have a responsibility to ensure that the values of this and future generations are reflected in the constitution and fabric of British politics and society.

Sometimes, the evolution of the constitution has failed to keep pace with the evolution of society, or government has been unwilling to recognize the need for reform, or an institution has been stretched so far that further evolutionary reform is impossible. In such circumstances, legislative intervention has proven necessary. There are such landmarks legislative reforms of which we think when looking at previous constitutional reform programs. The 20th century saw a large amount of change in society, economy and politics, which went beyond the ability of the constitution to cope with simply through adaptation or evolution. There was a significant degree of pressing demand for constitutional change. This has led to the following constitutional amendments.

From 1997, the Labour Government began introducing the constitutional changes required in a modern democracy. These included: Creating a Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly, and making devolution a practical reality, Modernization of the House of Lords, ending the right of the majority of hereditary peers to be members of the House, Establishing the independence of the Bank of England, allowing interest rate decisions to be made free of active political involvement, Embedding a modern Human Rights Act into United Kingdom law, giving the domestic courts the ability to rule on human rights issues, Introducing the Freedom of Information Act, increasing transparency and the ability to hold Government to account, Reforming the role of Lord Chancellor so that the holder of the office is no longer head of the judiciary or Speaker of the House of Lords, Legislating to create a new free-standing Supreme Court, separating the highest appeal court from Parliament and removing the Law Lords from the legislature, Establishing an independent Judicial Appointments Commission to select candidates for judicial office, Establishing a new system of devolved government in London with the creation of the Greater London Authority, Establishing the Northern Ireland Assembly, providing the opportunity for a continued, stable settlement for the first time in generations.

The Government is proud of these achievements but we must go further if we are to meet the challenges, Power remains too centralized and too concentrated in government, It is not sufficiently clear what power government should and should not have, Some people have become cynical about, and increasingly disengaged from the political process, Britain needs to articulate better a shared understanding of what it means to be British, and of what it means to live in the UK. Surveys consistently display very low levels of trust in politicians. In 1983 eighteen percent of people trusted politicians to tell the truth. This fell to a low of just fifteen percent in 1997 before rising to twenty percent in 2005.

In respect to the above constitutional amendment, Hon Jack Straw states that:

The time has come to build a consensus about the changes that we can make together to help renew trust and confidence in our democratic institutions, to make them fit for the modern world and to begin properly to articulate and celebrate what it means to be British. The aim of the proposals in this paper should be to create a renewed bond between government and the people it serves, bringing people closer to the decision-making process at both the local and national level. (Straw, p. 98)

The Government intends to initiate an inclusive national debate through which the whole country can come together to develop a British statement of values. This national debate will provide an opportunity to begin exploring the wider issue of citizenship and the future of our constitutional arrangements which underpins everything about how we function as a nation.

The Government has these goals to invigorate democracy with people who are proud to participate in decision-making at every level, to clarify the role of government, both central and local, to rebalance power between Parliament and the Government, and give Parliament more ability to hold the Government to account, to work with the British people to achieve a stronger sense of what it means to be British, and to launch an inclusive debate on the future of the country's constitution.

In accordance with the above resolutions of the constitution, Hon Jack Straw believes that:

Only a confident UK will be able to adapt to the economic challenges of globalization. Only a country sure of its identity will be able to come together to ensure our mutual security: common, inclusive values can help us overcome the threat from extremism of all kinds. Only a nation certain of its national purpose will be able to pull together to meet the common challenges of global climate change. (Straw, p.99)

The Government believes that a clearer definition of citizenship would give people a better sense of their British identity in a globalized world. British citizenship and the rights and responsibilities that accompany it need to be valued and meaningful, not only for recent arrivals looking to become British but also for young British people themselves. The Government believes that everyone in the UK should be offered an easily understood set of rights and responsibilities when they receive citizenship. This might serve to make citizenship more attractive but also to make it clearer to potential citizens what it is to be a member of Britain's democratic society. There might also be a case for extending this to those who have the right to permanent residence in the UK. An approach which offered genuine benefits to permanent residents could offer greater transparency and credibility and encourage new citizens to

integrate into wider British society, helping them participate in our democracy. Many permanent residents go on to become citizens, so this could also be an important step towards citizenship for those that want it.

In line with the above norms, the government of Britain clearly points out what it takes to be a citizen in Britain extending it to those who have the right to permanent resident in the UK and how it benefits the citizens. It is worth noting that, Black Britons are not culturally dominated because of citizenship but because they are black people and are looked at as slaves in Britain. Therefore the norm of this constitutional amendment do not in any way help to eradicate cultural hegemony in practice but rather gives priority to the white Britons to fully participate as British citizens with a set of rights within the British democratic society. That notwithstanding discipline as a norm in Britain is one of the factors that curb violence and at the same time propagate cultural Hegemony in Britain.

Disciplinary power in Britain is manifested in the rules and regulations within schools and the Judiciary. In *Elmina's Kitchen* most of Kwei-Armah's characters are criminals. They are constantly picked and locked up in prison by the military. The ability of the government to exercise authority over these criminals helps to suppress them and reduce crime and violence which specifically identifies blacks in Britain. Deli informs the police about the criminal act (the Renton Attack) committed by Digger and Ashley, Ashley is not in accordance with him:

Ashley: You didn't have to inform the police, Dad. Where you *ever going to go to the world and will not have to look over your shoulder?*

Deli: *That's not better than being in prison?*

Ashley: *Is still prison, just bigger cell. (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 92)*

From the above, the action of the police limits Black British cultural practice of crime and violence. Even though they commit crimes because of poverty and illiteracy, they are mistreated and culturally dominated upon. This is done through the suppression of their ways of life. According to Ashley domination of blacks by white Britons is a bigger cell than being punished for crime and violence.

Disciplinary power is further exercised in school. In Brother Kiyi's Bookshop where Blacks are called upon to lend and read Black History Books, there is no freedom of expression. This is seen in a case where Kwesi and Kiyi are discussing about the importance of knowing

the Black History. Kwesi mentions Michael Jackson as being an example of black self-hate but Kiyi warns him to be mindful of his words else he risk facing prison terms w Kiyhen he says: “Good talk Kwesi but make sure your words should not take you where they should not. Jail life na nice!” (*Fix Up* 120)]. This is a clear indication that in a contemporary Britain, Blacks cannot express themselves freely. They cannot freely discuss issues pertaining to Black History. They are intimidated by norms that prohibit black history from being taught in schools thus a form of suppressing black history while uplifting white history. Taking into consideration the fact that history shapes and determines our culture, it becomes imperative to say cultural hegemony is propagated through disciplinary power in school.

Good governance is seen as going beyond the exercise of sovereign power in order to foster the population’s prosperity, health, longevity, productivity and happiness. It is realized that political power is exercised in a number of ways through different agencies, social groups and techniques which may only be loosely associated with the formal bureaucracy of the state. In this regard, Sister Norma feels she is called Madame by the Head of Council because she masters her community well so she is eligible to stand for election but she is lacking in one aspect. She has to look like a white British first. This is true in the sense that Black British spend more on cosmetics rather than education. This is because of inferiority complex. Racism has created a vacuum so much such that they desire to change their skin colour, hair do, eye lashes and eye brows to look like that of the white race. This is further encouraged through acculturation.

Norma: You does need any special qualifications to go into politics?

Kiyi: No,(he moves) why?

Apart from great capacity for wickedness (Kwei-Armah, 2004, p. 137)

From the above quotation it can be said that Black British people do not see politics as yielding fruit but a form of wickedness. This is as result of the fact that in the midst of politics there is racism, discrimination and oppression. Politicians in Britain fail to respect and represent the Black British Culture. This explains why Black British playwrights such as Kwame Kwei-Armah seek to inform the black race about their culture through cinematic representation.

Govern mentality, then, is interested in an analysis of the mechanisms of government and specific and diverse processes of practices found inside and outside states institutions that cut across domains normally thought of as separate, for example; the state, society and family. These elements, practices, and ways of thinking come together so both frames can resolve problems. Even though govern mentality is expected to pave the way for unity; it is not what is practiced in Britain. Britain is endowed with a number of races bearing multiple cultures. These races are disunited. This is as a result of domination and suppression from the white race. In *Elmina's Kitchen*, Clifton sings about discrimination, segregation and racism between white and black Britons. In football the white will say “go home you black bastard”.

Clifton: In England, what you must understand is whatever you do, wherever you rise, please realize; you could never disguise you'sa black man in cold cold land. (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p.55)

Govern mentality does not intend to supplant to notions of state authority where power is typically exercised vertically through the application of deacons bureaucratic structure, or rules. Govern mentality does suggest, however, that an additional horizontal approach be taken to gain an understanding of underlying relationships, which constitute the people and the institution within a given population. Its ultimate concern is how we govern others and ourselves, how the government becomes one for each and all or expressing a concern not just for a population as a whole but also for the population.

From the above expression, the government of Britain in 2007 presented their constitutional arrangements by Honorable Jack Straw (The Secretary of State for Justice and Lord Chancellor) by the command of Her Majesty. He states that:

Our constitutional arrangement fundamentally underpins how we function as a nation. The nature of relationship the government has with citizens, the credibility of our institution and the rights and responsibility of citizens all determines the health of our citizens. Without a shared national purpose and a strong bond between people and government, we cannot meet the challenges of today's world-whether in guaranteeing security, delivering world class education and health services, building strong communities or responding to the challenges of globalization. [...] (Straw, p.5)

In relation to the above quotation, it is evident that globalization has brought about change in Britain. Faced with people from different works of life, Britain finds it difficult integrating different cultures into the British society. In order to preserve the mainstream culture, the government of Britain governs these different races through the policy of acculturation. This enables them to learn and practice the main stream culture thus giving way to cultural hegemony.

Governance in Britain is not the only factor that propagates Cultural Hegemony. Factors such as Language, Acting or Theatre, Dressing, and Etiquette also go a long way to promote Cultural Hegemony.

According to Jiao Xue and Wenjing Zuo in the Department of English Zhenjiang Watercraft College China in their article “English Dominance and its Influence on International Communication” they observed that:

In Language, culture and hegemony, Language is a carrier of culture and every language is a crystallization of each culture. It is the process of cultural exchange and cultural diffusion for people to use language to communicate with each other users can gain a sense of cultural identity and social belongings through language. In general the language of a nation is deeply rooted in national culture and accompanied by national tradition. Language cannot survive, developed and improve without culture. Language is the core of culture. (Xue, p.1)(Zuo, p.2).

In the above observation, The Government has already improved on a considerable range of measures aimed at raising the profile and meaning of citizenship, introducing language and Knowledge of Life tests for new applicants and starting the highly successful citizenship ceremonies which are organized in Town Halls across the country. English as a dominant language for all citizens in Britain relates the fact that communication through language enhances cultural identity. Therefore, English language in Britain promotes Cultural Hegemony. The life of Kwame Kwei-Armah says it all. Before 19 years, he knew nothing about Language talkless of where he comes from. Even though his parents were aware of their origin, they hid it from their children. The dominant language spoken by them in their home was English and not the Ghanaian native language.

It is cultural hegemony swayed by cultural dominance, which shows the dominance of strong culture over weak culture. Language advantages can be used to spread values, pursue national interests. Britain and other English speaking Countries vigorously promote the expansion of English, making it became a global language. In a sense, it is culture wars at the

level of language and language is used as a weapon to violet other countries .In the play *Fix Up*, Alice picks up a book titled *The Slave Narrative* and proceeds to read. Reading the book, Alice comes across language barrier which is one of the greatest problems faced by Blacks in Britain. They struggle hard to speak English so as to get a sense of belonging. Below is an example of how they struggle to communicate.

One day masser Reynold came back from Barbados wid one high yellow gal he just buy. They say she was real pretty but I can hardly remember. But he never put she to live wid the other niggers, he buil she a special little house away from the quarter down by the river which run back al de plantations [...]. (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 132)

From the above, the accent of the persona in the slave narrative reiterates the struggle to speak English even though they have their own native languages. Though most of them are illiterates, they are oblige to speak or will not be part of that society. Through English language, cultural domination is propagated in Britain.

Cultural hegemony no longer refers to non-violent culture domination form which a country rules over ruled class. It includes non-violent ideological hegemony among races especially among Western developed countries and third world countries. As a colonist policy which Western countries conduct over Eastern countries, as a deep rooted thinking mode and power discourse, it does not exit the stage of history with the development of time.

Furthermore, race is one of those factors that propagate cultural Hegemony in Britain. This has to do with the white race versus the black race. The fact that white Britons see themselves superior to the blacks renders every black cultural aspect inferior.

In John Solomon's Text entitled *Race and Racism in Contemporary Britain*, it is stated that:

The absence of a mass racist political movement is at one level a clear feature of the current situation in Britain. During the 1992 general election, for example although question about race and immigration were on political agenda, they were no key issues. Despite warnings that the race card was likely to be played during the elections campaign there was little public debate about this issue. (...) (Solomon, p. 4)

In the above quotation, it is evident that Britain does not recognize and respect other races in Britain. They are more concerned about the white race thus ignoring other races during elections as stipulated in the political agent.

The Challenges of Multicultural Intergration

In a multicultural society, it is the responsibility of the government to instill discipline which is aimed at constructing cultural integration, peaceful co-existence among the different cultural and ethnic groups, races, identity and many other components that make up that society. In this regard, the British government has designed rules and regulations to ensure multicultural co-existence that will safeguard and preserve her national culture and her identity. Although these policies are put in place to ensure peaceful co-existence in a diverse society like Britain, it is evident that all the efforts put in place proved abortive in that until now, Britain has not been able to achieve the desired result of multicultural peaceful co-existence. This is the reason why Kwame Kwei-Armah in his two plays under study dramatically put in place the challenges faced by Black British people in an attempt to uplift their culture which identifies them as people of the Black race. He uses figurative language such as allusions, idiomatic expression, imagery and metaphors to convey his message to the British people and to the world at large.

In order for Britain to sustain a multicultural society, state policies are put in place to effect smooth integration of different cultures. Betsabe Navarro Romeo in an article “Proceeding of the 34TH International Aedean Conference in America” reports that after having experienced identity problem as a result of loss of the empire and the consequences of globalization and migration, Britain has tried to redefine her national identity. This has been done through tailoring cultural policies to making Britain a better place for those living in the country.

Rod Fisher and Carla Figuera in *Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe* explained that the most striking issue about the United Kingdom’s cultural policy is “to make the best things in life available to the largest possible number of people”. They further elucidate that the objectives of the United Kingdom’s cultural policies are to increase and deepen access to and participate in the cultural as well as sporting life of the nation to ensure the experience offered is truly excellent and fulfills the potential that cultural activity has to change people’s lives. One of the major policies designed in Britain is to inculcate and promote other cultures in the Britain in order to enhance peaceful co-existence in the concept of multiculturalism. In this regard, Britain, like other multicultural societies tries to maintain and develop her diversity and to encourage equal participation in daily life and the country’s social institution by placing barriers. Despite the attempts, cultural conservatism in Britain is a challenge to multicultural integration.

Thomas Hylland Eriksen, in his article titled “Two Tales of Cultural Diversity” see multiculturalism as “[...] the view that complex societies consist of several bounded cultures, and that they are entitled to equal treatment by greater society notwithstanding their differences”. For the past years, multicultural policies have been adopted by Britains’ local administrations to match the demands of the different cultures that increasingly come into Britain. In 1997 the New Labour Government committed to a multiculturalists’ approach at a national level, but after 2021 there was something of backlash, led by centre-left commentators such as Trevor Phillips and David Goodhart. The government then embraced a policy of community cohesion rather. For many years, Britain had managed diversity through integration, where new comers and their tradition were gradually absorbed into the mainstream culture but more and more people from different backgrounds were entering Britain. Trevor Phillips after observing this situation argued that Britain had become complacent about its ability to manage diversity, and that integration was not treated with the priority it ought to have had. Consequently very different cultural groups collided as a result of their incompatible attitudes to their ways of life which resulted to ethnic conflict.

However, faced with multiple challenges as time passes, Britain’s multiculturalism has, consequently undergone different and significant phases throughout the years. This has been a conscious effort to seek a friendlier and more form of multiculturalism in respect to their increasing rate at which Britain has continuously become ethno cultural as different groups of people keep arriving Britain. These changes, in Britain’s multiculturalism, are also initiated in order to counteract what Philips refers to as “chronic culture wars” which inevitably results to identity crisis in multiculturalism societies.

Similarly Phil Wood et al. in *Cultural Diversity in Britain: A Toolkit for cross cultural cooperation, multiculturalism* states that:

Multicultural languages, religions and cultural practices were encouraged, and rights and freedoms were enshrined in legislative. The authors of multiculturalism, however, shield away from any form of economic intervention assuming that, once discrimination has been outlawed, the market would in time integrate and reward equally the minorities. [...] (Wood et al, p.3).

From the above quotation, we can see the attempt made by Britain to accommodate and integrate foreign cultures into the British cultural landscape through the policy of multiculturalism. By legislation, the languages, believes and cultural aspects of immigrants (minorities) are promoted. Phil et al. also argued that Britain’s effort to integrate and promote

equalities of minorities' cultural identities is better than the effort made by any other country of the world.

Furthermore, Phi Wood et al. in their book titled *Cultural Diversity in Britain: A Toolkit for Cross-cultural Co-operation, Multiculturalism* observed that:

The charge now leveled at multiculturalism is that it is created at false sense of harmony by establishing a system for the distribution of power and resources, which worked for a while but which was unable to adapt to change, and which imperceptibly moved from being part of the system encouraged the creation of culturally and spatially distinct communities, fronted by community leaders, and that difference became the very currency by which importance was judged and progress made. (Wood et al, p. 3-4)

From the quotation, we can understand the writers' intension that the policy of British Multiculturalism has not fulfilled the purpose for which it was created. It only raised people's hope about how possible cultural integration could be but failed to concretize the project. In other words, multiculturalism has fallen short of being a solution to the cultural identity crisis in Britain; rather, the policy has eventually become part of the multicultural problem in Britain. Contrary to what was expected, the policy has led to the creation of different cultural communities within the British community. Instead of each culture coexisting with the others; it has created a platform whereby peoples live together but are not culturally secured because of the complexities involved in accommodating different cultural traits.

In regard to the above, the play *Elmina's Kitchen* is a demonstration of these different Cultural Communities in Britain. Digger compares the Black community in Britain to the Red Indian community not leaving out the white Britons. According to Digger, a black man is always behind because he does not know how to analyse his environment. He compares black man with Indian man who can easily understand and cope with the environment. Digger reminds Deli of escaping from his roots. Linguistically Deli cursed Digger when he used language of their Heritage but if it was an adopted language Deli would have hailed it high.

Digger: Oh it is alright for you to use all manner of Viking expels, expels, swear words but as soon as mother fucker uses language of our heritage, you start to cuss. That is why I call you British Black. (Kwei-Armah, 2003 p. 10)

From the above, the presence of different communities such as the white and black community renders multicultural integration difficult in Britain.

Phil Wood et al. Observed that:

Another accusation is that, far from being a system that spoke to the whole of Britain society, multiculturalism spoke only for minorities. This served to maintain the exoticism of minority cultures hindering a two way conversation with British culture. (Wood et al. p.4)

This is to say that mainstream culture in Britain sees multiculturalism as a doctrine that defends only the cultures and identities of minority groups rather than that of mainstream. White Britons see Multiculturalism as a system that devalues their culture and celebrates migrant cultures in the Britain. This policy, according to the quotation above has only helped to make it extremely difficult to achieve the initial goal of tolerance. It has rather created a situation whereby there has been an increase in cultural extremists. Instead of reducing racial tensions, the policy of multiculturalism has aggravated them. These criticisms have kept the form of British multiculturalism constantly in motion over the years.

As part of the change and evolution in regard to British multiculturalism David Cameron, in February 2011, delivered a speech arguing against what he calls state multiculturalism in which he said:

Under the doctrine of state multiculturalism, we have encouraged different cultures to live separate lives, apart from each other and apart from the mainstream. We've failed to provide a vision of society to which they feel they want to belong. We've even tolerated these segregated communities behaving in ways that run completely counter to our values [...] (Cameron, 2011)

David Cameron's argument in the above quotation is that Britain has become too tolerance to migrant cultures even to the detriment of British cultural values. These migrant cultures, according to Cameroon, have created segregated communities which go against Britain's cultural values. Seemingly in an attempt to promote multiculturalism, Britain has gone a long way to destroy her own cultural heritage. It is like making a stranger comfortable in your home while you are not comfortable yourself. What may appear more appropriate judging from the quotation above is acculturation rather than multiculturalism. That is, immigrants from other backgrounds such as Asia, Africa and the Caribbean, who enter Britain, should acculturate. They should imbibe and abide by British cultural values. Cameroon concludes that:

Britain should encourage meaningful and active participation in society, by shifting the balance of power away from the state and towards the people and also

help build stronger pride in local identity, so people feel free to say, “yes, I am a Muslim, I am a Hindu, I am Christian, but I am also a Londoner or a Berliner too (Cameron, 2021)

In the quotation above, David Cameron advocates the types of multiculturalism that, on one hand, allows immigrants to live and exercise their diverse cultural identities; and on the other hand, obliges them to respect the national cultural values and heritage of Britain. Cameron sees an absolute need for Britain to keep hanging on her cultural values and not compromise them for foreign values. This, according to David Cameron, will prevent a situation in which foreign cultural values will gain grounds in Britain, become so popular that they will eventually affect the mainstream culture. That is, David Cameron preaches a multicultural space in which migrant cultures are recognized but not given preference over the host country's culture.

Panikos Panayi shared the same opinion with David Cameron when he argues in his article; “Multicultural Britain: a very Brief History” that to certain contemporary British political minds multiculturalism is symbolic and representative of the negative consequences of mass immigration. In such a situation hostile politicians believe ethnic minority communities develop lives of their own and separate themselves off from the “mainstream” society with which they have no desire to integrate.

Audrey Osler, “citizenship Education, Communities and Multiculturalism”, writes

Cameron’s critique of multiculturalism, seems directly related to the conservative desire to reduce the role of the state and promote small government. First in 2008 and then again 2011, Cameron attacked “state multiculturalism”, claiming it undermines community. He claimed that initiatives to promote multiculturalism divided people by ethnicity [...] (Osler).

The British journalist and writer, Johann Hari, argues against what he refers to as the old “whiter-than-white mono-culturalism” whereby if people are going to live together, they need to look and feel similar to each other, and have a tightly prescribed shared cultural situation in which diverse cultures would safeguard their identities. Instead, he calls for and celebrates what he terms cultural liberalism. That is a situation in which diverse cultures are encouraged to function in the same community. If individuals are allowed to live their lives the way their cultural affiliations permit them, everyone will secure their original cultural identity and preserve the cultural elements that make them stand out. In his article titled, “Rowan

Williams has Shown us One thing; Why Multiculturalism Must be Abandoned” Hari opines that:

A liberal society allows an individual to do whatever he or she wants, provided it doesn't harm other people. You can choose to wear PVC hot pants or a veil. You can choose to spend all day praying, or all day mocking people who pray. Where a multiculturalist prizes the rights of religious groups, a liberal favors of the individual (Hari, p. 2)

From the quotation, Hari holds that Britain comprises of people of different ethnic, cultural, religious and political affiliations. That is, contemporary Britain is diversified in almost all domains. The cultural values of these ethnic, religious and political groups are supposed to be accommodated so long as they do not cause any harm to other people. Everyone should be allowed to, for example, dress and worship the way that is appropriate to them without suffering persecution from anyone.

It is important to note that, in order to transmit and enhance the above practices in a multicultural Britain, playwrights such as Kwame Kwei-Armah demonstrate what goes on in a contemporary multicultural Britain in his plays *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix Up*. In his writings, he blends a number of figurative expressions such as imagery, metaphors, simile, allusions, idioms, satire in order to make his point clear.

In the play *Fix Up*, Kwei-Armah makes great use of imagery. The image of Michael Jackson is symbolic of a prominent manifestation of black self-hate. Michael Jackson has been a member of a Militant Black Organization for ten years but because he felt threatened by his Black identity which includes his culture and his skin color, he had to bleach his skin to look like a white.

Brother Kiyi: Hey, I just read that Michael Jackson has been a signed member of the Nation of Islam for ten years?

Kwesi : How can you have the most prominent manifestation of Black self-hate as a member of a militant Black Organization.? Char! Michael Jackson should have been short the moment he bleached his skin. (Kwei-Armah, 2004, p. 120)

The action and image of Michael Jackson is alluded to historical events. Through Brother Kiyi's Bookshop, we are informed that Michael Jackson was a member of the Militant Black Organization for Ten years yet he bleached out the black melanin and became a white. This might have been because black skin was mocked at by the white so he deemed it necessary to look like a white so as to be able to integrate freely in a radicalized society.

In *Elmina's Kitchen*, the accent of Digger is a reflection of a multicultural background in which he finds himself. His accent and diction all tells us that he has come across a number of cultures. Digger's accent swings from his native Grenadian to hard core Jamaican to authentic Black London. At this point, we get to know that Black Britons are confused with the language they use due to the fact that they have come across different races before finally settling down as Blacks in Britain. His accent is creole, a mixture of Pidgin English, English and other native languages from different cultural background.

Digger: Born a sufferer, grow up as a sufferer, fe-mek it as a sufferer, fight a sufferer, survive as a sufferer, move amongst the ghetto ah most ah dem ah suffer ah etc. (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 6)

Even though Digger has a multicultural accent, he sees Blacks in Britain as less privileged, poor, dull and savage for trying to follow the white British ways through great admiration. The image of darkness as introduced in the prologue in *Elmina's Kitchen* is symbolic of savagery, backwardness and despair. He feels that the fact that they are Black people in Britain, they cannot achieve anything better apart from being second class citizens.

Digger: See you. You are coming jus like your cousin Suffi, a rhated Englis man.

Deli: Pauses for a moment confused.

Please explain to me how much my female cousin cousin can be a white male.

Digger: You know what I mean, she love too much blasted English man. (Shaking his head). You British blacks (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 7)

From the above quotation, it can be seen that Black British identity is influenced by British cultural hegemony vesus multicultural integration and its challenges over the years. Black Britons do not freely socialize. As Blacks in Britain, they are faced with inferiority complex. They have to let go their own cultural practices and copy the white culture so as to be integrated into the Britain. Even after this acculturation, they are still considered strangers in Britain because of the black melanin on their skin. *Elmina's Kitchen* is introduced to us with a Multicultural background. In Act one scene one, the play opens in a mid afternoon in Elmina's Kitchen where it is raining. The setting is Elmina's Kitchen a one- notch- above –tacky West Indian restaurant in Murder Mile Hackney. The prologue in act one scene one is a staged play in which the prologue is a concoction of African Traditional music and American blues. In Act

one scene one of the play, in a detailed description of Elmina's Kitchen, most of the adjectives are directed towards African- American Cultural Artifacts. The play presents and respects the Black African traditional ways of life and the qualities this culture can present. In the prologue of *Elmina's Kitchen* Kwei-Armah paints a picture of this beautiful African culture as presented below.

A costumed man in darkness standing absolutely still with a gurkel (a one- string African guitar) famed for possessing the power to draw offspring in his hands.(Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 1)

The above quotation is a justification of the fact that Britain as a multicultural society comprises people from diverse cultural backgrounds who are willing to integrate their culture but are cut up with challenges. The acting of a man with a guitar shows the distasteful attitude in which he displays his head thus depicting a crisis.

This chapter has examined the concept of Cultural Hegemony on alien cultures which renders multicultural integration in Britain especially Black British Culture difficult. The chapter further examines the challenges of multicultural integration in Britain. From the challenges, it is clear that it is difficult for any cultural entity in a multicultural Britain to maintain its original cultural values without any external influence from other cultures especially the host Culture. This explains why Blacks in Britain are caught in-between multiple cultures thus their identity is misrepresented given the fact that culture shapes people's identities. This situation boils down to identity and belonging issue in a multicultural Britain in which Blacks are culturally dominated upon by their white brothers. The playwright has taken upon himself the challenge to demonstrate Black British identity and belonging in Britain. This call for concern from the playwright would be discussed in the subsequent chapter titled Kwei-Amah's Dramatic Vision.

CHAPTER FIVE

ARMAH'S DRAMATIC VISION

Chapter five discusses Kwei-Armah's dramatic vision. It retrospects the voice of the author concerning Black life in Britain. The author dramatizes Black life in Britain. He paints a picture of the problems faced by Black Britons. In his plays, he denounces racism, suppression, misrepresentation of Blacks. He wants the British government to sort out these issues and get the Black race represented without any form of discrimination. This would create in the Black Britons a sense of belonging in Britain. The chapter reveals how Kwei-Armah decries racism. White race has dominated, suppressed, marginalized and also differentiated against Black race. In his dramatic vision, he wants the world to know that all cultures should be respected and represented irrespective of race. He brings to our view and understanding the history and culture of Black British people in *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix Up* through characters such as Brother Kiyi, Deli, Digger and Clifton. Since the culture of people shape and define the identity formation of the people, it is left for Black Britons to showcase their culture which identifies them.

Cultural Revival and Resistance

World War II marked another period of growth for the Black communities in London, Liverpool and elsewhere in Britain. Many Blacks from the Caribbean and West Africa arrived in small groups as war time workers, merchant seamen, and servicemen from the army, navy, and air force. This movement into Britain has greatly altered the cultural and political landscape of Britain. The population of Britain has changed from one that constituted Christians to one that constituted creeds cultures and communities from all over the world. Britain had become the center of the largest overseas population of West Indians. This migration event is often labelled "Wind rush", a reference to the HMT Empire Wind rush, the ship that carried the first major group of Caribbean migrants to the United Kingdom in 1948. "Caribbean" is itself not one ethnic or political identity; for example, some of this wave of immigrants

were Indo-Caribbean. The most widely used term at that time was West Indian (or sometimes coloured). Black Britons did not come into widespread use until the second generations were born to these post-war migrants to the UK. Although British by nationality, due to friction between them and the white majority they were often born into communities that were relatively closed, creating the roots of what would become a distinct Black British identity.

By the 1950s, there was this consciousness of Black people as a separate group that had not been there between 1932 and 1938. The increasing consciousness of Black British people were deeply informed by the influx of Black American culture imported by Black servicemen during and after World War II, music being a central example of what Jacqueline Nassy-Brown calls "diasporic resources". These close interactions between Americans and Black British were not only material but also inspired the expatriation of some Black British women to America after marrying servicemen (some of whom later repatriated to the UK). The 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act was passed in Britain along with a succession of other laws in 1968, 1971 and 1981, which severely restricted the entry of Black immigrants into Britain. During this period it is widely argued that emergent Blacks and Asians struggled in Britain against racism and prejudice. During the 1970s and partly in response to both the rise in racial intolerance and the rise of the Black Power movement abroad, Black became detached from its negative connotations, and was reclaimed as a marker of pride: "Black is beautiful". In 1975, David Pitt was appointed to the House of Lords. He spoke against racism and for equality in regard to all residents of Britain. Given that the Black race was suppressed and dominated upon by the white race, playwrights such as Kwame Kwei-Armah have not relent their efforts in letting the cry and voices of Black people heard in Britain.

As already brainstormed in the previous chapters, Black Britons are of the fact that there is discrimination against the Black race and culture in Britain. They do not have a sense of belonging in Britain due to the fact that they are not culturally represented well as their culture shape and determine their identity. In contemporary Britain, the cultural reality for the past decades has been one which the mainstream culture threatens to wipe out migrant cultural identities. Black Britons are culturally marginalized, suppressed, and oppressed. In *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix UP* Black Britons willingly compromise their cultural identity in order to adopt what has been presented to them. They do this in order to belong to the society that does not appreciate Black Ways of life. In this process of acculturation, Blacks in *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix up* still fail to get themselves completely assimilated into becoming full Britons. They

realized they were still treated as strangers thus began to see themselves as neither Britons nor Afro Caribbean. This has led to the creation of new identities which neither identifies them as British nor Africans. In the play *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix UP*, third generation Blacks such as Digger, Ashley, Alice and Kwesi develop new identities. They identify themselves with crime, violence and prostitution. This is because of the difficult life style they have encountered as a result of slavery, racism, discrimination and suppression.

Britain as a purely conservative country would not trade its culture for any reason. Britains' culture is noted for its distinction and uniqueness across the globe. Britain today stands firm in preserving its culture because this culture is known for its outstanding role in shaping the socio- economic and political landscape of Britain. It should be noted that Britain finds it difficult integrating other cultures into the mainstream culture because grooming other cultures will alter and devalue their cultural values. This would also bring about a new form of cultural identity to both Black and White Britons. The value Britain attaches to her Culture is so much such that she had to exit from European Union, what is known as Brexit. In so far as Britain hold strong terms to preserve her cultural identity, it is therefore imperative for immigrants and minority cultural group to find out what they have to do in order to maintain their cultural identity and belong to such a culturally complex society. Having read through Kwame Kwei-Armah's *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix Up* it is the authors wish to valorize all races, and to culturally identify immigrants especially Black Britons without any form of discrimination, marginalization and oppression from the white Britons. Kwei-Armah wants Britain to know that the way she gives value to her culture is the same way Blacks valorize African culture and would want it to be represented wherever they find themselves. Also Kwei-Armah unanimously appeals to Black Britons to focus on education, upgrade themselves, get a positive mindset of changing the narrative for a better cultural identity unlike what previously identifies Black Britons (crime and violence).

Sandra Lilyana in "The Disruption of Home and Identity in Black Britain Writing" observed that:

Black British literature is influential for introducing the complexity of life and cultural fragmentation experienced by the black diaspora in Britain. Often written in the form of narratives that 'move from one nation to another, from one culture to another, with no clear sense of "home" and "abroad" Black British literature pre-dominantly

portrays how the disruption of the notion of 'homeland' results in the problematic concept of Black British cultural and national identity (Lilyana, p. 2)

From the above observation, it is seen that the complexity of life and cultural fragmentation of Black Britons results in the problematic conception of Black British cultural and national identity. Black British playwrights are solely concerned with the idea of revamping the cultural identity and national status of Black immigrants into Britain given that the British community should revisit their conservative ideas of assimilating minorities culture into mainstream culture so as to give equal opportunities for all cultures to uplift their cultural values especially Black cultural values which identifies them as Black Britons. Armah is not satisfied with his Black British Nationality. This explains why as a Black British Playwright, he changes his name from Eyam Smith to Kwame Kwei-Armah. He is always dressed in Ghanaian traditional regalia which identify his roots as African. In his self affirmation as a Black born in Britain, he wants the white race to get Black Britons represented in Britain

Racial and Cultural Representation

Elmina's Kitchen and *Fix Up* are plays put in place by Kwei-Armah aimed at satirizing racism in contemporary Britain where Black Britons are marginalized and oppressed in a multiracial and multicultural society like Britain. It is obvious to state that racism in Britain is the root cause of the complexity of life in Britain. Black Britons are marginalized because as Blacks they are regarded as slaves, scavengers, illiterates and less privileged. The white race sees them as the inferior race thus this concept of white's domination over blacks.

Kwame Kwei-Armah in an interview with the Guardian conducted by Simon Hateton said that sometimes he experienced the rage first hand. He tells me a story of a train journey he took from New York to Baltimore.

I had my laptop open and was writing. A white male sat opposite me, probably in his late 50s. He was drinking and leant over and asked: Are you one of those scary black men cause I'm afraid of black men and spiders.' He then spilled bile for about 45 minutes. I said absolutely nothing, just going OK, trying to calm him down. In the end, he got up and put two fingers into the shape of a gun and went to my brain and said: 'That's what we should do with you, and he just went 'BAAAAAANG!' (Kwei-Armah, interview)

The above is an indication of the degree of rage in Britain as explained by Kwei-Armah in an interview with Simon Hateton. Living in Britain as a Black entails a lot of sacrifice

including sacrificing your cultural heritage and loss of self-esteem. This can be substantiated with the lives and living conditions of characters in *Elmina's Kitchen*. Reading through the play, it is seen that all of them do menial jobs ranging from slaves or servants to sales men and women. These characters live in ghettos under very poor and deplorable conditions. This area is mostly inhabited by Blacks. This racism has prompted Blacks living in Britain to resort to all forms of crimes and violence. The response to this is killing and jail life for them. A victim of jail life and death is Dougie, a Black killed in Prison for committing crime and violence. Kwei-Armah uses this character to show that Black race has no say in Britain. He wants the Black race to be respected and represented.

It is important to know that despite Britains' acculturation policy, first, second and third generation Blacks are still very much committed to practising their culture which identifies them as Black people. On page 50-52 of the play *Elmina's Kitchen* we hear voices on stage singing slow blues called "You Gotta Move" while the lights turn slowly off and on again, we see characters at Dougie's Funeral. Set to the side is a lone female figure in a traditional African headgear playing the Gurkel (Act Two). This is in respect of the African Communal life which in one point reminds us of the Blacks cultural heritage. In commemoration with Dougie's funeral, Deli's restaurant is renovated: painted, cleaned and tools replaced. On the walls is written "Dougie Andrews 1959-2003 RIP". The same hut that is used to run a small restaurant is still used for the funeral of his brother. This is in confirmation to the fact that Black life in Britain is so limited.

As a result of their hopelessness, they see religion as a consoling theme in life. This religion preaches vanity which helps to console them. Thus they sing

You may be poor

You may be rich

You may be young

You may be old

But when the lord gets ready for you, you ga'da move

You may be black

You may be white

But when the lord get ready for you, you ga'da move (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 51)

This is why Black British playwrights are so much concerned about the need to get their voices and their cries heard so as to get the Black race represented and integrated in Britain in

all domains of life so as to give them a sense of belonging. According to Horatia Harrod in his article entitled Kwame Kwei-Armah: “People of colour, the main stage is for you” he states

The first person of African-Caribbean descent to lead a major British theatre, he returns to a nation in the throes of what he describes as “an identity crisis”. Indeed, as he announced his first season of programming on Tuesday, the government was trying to explain why thousands of British residents who arrived from the Commonwealth decades ago were [...] (Harrod, p. 1)

From the above quotation, it can be seen that Kwame Kwei-Armah is a victim and witness of what he describes as “identity crisis”. Black Britons have moved from one geographical environment to another, faced with different cultural heritage before finally settling as Blacks in Britain. Decades after their settlement, the British government finds it difficult to represent and integrate them into the British community. The government resolves to repatriate immigrants who reached Britain decades ago. The question today is in relation with identity problem. Considering the fact that these displaced immigrants have made families in Britain and were at the level of third generation Blacks including mixed race and mixed culture, what identity are they going to hold? Would they be welcomed in their respective countries of origin? Kwame finds it relevant to cry out against their misrepresentation and marginalization. In an interview with the Guardian he states that:

We don't quite know who we are, who we were, who we're gonna be, says Kwei-Armah I have lived through a colder Britain, and my fear right now as I move back to Brexit Britain, or Brexit England, is how to negotiate with a country that can feel, at times, like the Britain I thought we had grown out of and how to move back towards the values that we have grown into, ones that seek equality [...] (Kwei-Armah, interview 2)

After reading *Elmina's Kitchen*, Yusri Fajars in his review thinks that Black British identity has become an intriguing issue in Britain since Black immigrants settled and created a diasporic community there. The Black community in Britain should negotiate their identity with the whites and adapt to the British community which tend to position them as “the others”. In the play the image of identity of the Black immigrants has been saturated and stereotyped by some constructed characteristics such as uneducated, uncivilized, inferior, criminal and violent.

Black British Drama has been considered as the paramount literary works which represent Black British identity and becomes a means for Black British to foreground their voices within the dominant white narrative and culture. Peacock claims that Black dramatist

have gradually obtained opportunities to express their ideas and voices in Britain although they have been regarded by white majority to be outside mainstream culture (Peacock 2008:48).

In *Elmina's Kitchen* Kwei-Armah strikingly delineates the Caribbean community in Britain and highlights a distinct way of its members to survive in the British society. As a minority group, Black British descendants are imbued with the identity which is reflected through language, arts, clothes, custom, ways of thinking and behavior. Most specifically, Black British identity in *Elmina's Kitchen* is marked by crime and violence. All in which is as a result of racism that they are driven into the kind of life they find themselves living in Britain.

In an interview with the Guardian by Alicia Canter in October 2017 Kwame Kwei-Armah says:

He stops, to make it clear that he's not bragging. "It can sound like a boast, but that is systematic inequality. I cannot believe there is only one person that can hold the reins of a major cultural institution. It doesn't make sense. Therefore it has to be systemic." (Kwei-Armah, 2017, interview)

Kwei-Armah is putting everything in place to be an example for the Black British youth to emulate so that they can change the myth about Black British People. Harrod states in his article titled "Kwame Kwei-Armah: People of Colour, the Main Stage is for You"

*Rarely has an appointment been greeted with such approval. Kwei-Armah's accomplished CV is highly unusual for an artistic director. Whereas a number have been successful actors, it is almost unprecedented for artistic directors to also have a formidable record as a playwright. Kwei-Armah has proved himself in all three fields – as an actor, he played paramedic Finlay Newton in *Casualty* for five seasons; his plays *Elmina's Kitchen*, *Fix Up* and *Statement of Regret* were all staged at the National Theatre [...] (Harrod, p. 4)*

From the above, it is clear to understand that despite all the marginalization, racism, differentiation, Kwei-Armah is determined in changing the narrative, changing lives, changing Nations and changing the world. His achievements are saluted by Black British youth and the white race. He tells the world that as a Black male you are told you cannot make it well as you can. Colour should not be a determining factor for who is British. Both the Black Race should be given equal opportunities to be part of the British society.

On page 55 of *Elmina's Kitchen*, Clifton sings about discrimination and racism between blacks and whites.

*Clifton: Here we go. They use to call me culture master. Be prepared to get teach.
(sings)*

History is a funny thing

*History is a funny thing
 Listen to me, people,
 Cos is about football me I sing.
 Clive Best the greatest
 Baller West Ham ever had,
 But from the stands they'd shout each game,
 Go home you black bastard (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 55)*

The Black race in Britain is discriminated against and oppressed by their white counterparts. Even in football, Blacks are chased home and are described by the appellation “Bastards”. They do not in any way belong to the British society. Clifton who is a first generation Black Briton also has this to say:

*Clifton: Oh England, what a wonderful land,
 In England what you must understand,
 Is whatever you do, wherever you rise,
 Please reaise, you could never disguise
 You's black man in cold cold land (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 55)*

From the above quotation, the playwright makes it clear that England is known for its discriminative attitude against the Black race. Being a highly conservative society, it is left for the Blacks to know that they are blacks and will remain blacks even if you rise to higher heights. So the best way possible in Britain is for the society to celebrate differences as a multicultural and multiracial society without the involvement of marginalization and racial discrimination.

Furthermore, Kwei-Armah’s play *Fix Up* addresses Black British contemporary issues such as Black British history, culture and identity. It is through history that we are informed about our past and present. Brother Kiyi has always been so concerned about opening a Bookshop that sells history books because it brings to mind the history of Black slavery. They have been brought to America and Britain as slaves. They were later liberated but their past and present represent nothing to the white race. Even at that, the British government still prohibits the teaching of Black history in British schools. Brother Kiyi takes it as a responsibility in educating the Black British youth about their history; where they are coming from and where they are heading to so that the Black British youth can respect where they are today. It is through history that Black youth are informed about Black Cultural Heritage. This culture shapes and determines their identity because as freed slaves, their roots are traced back

to Africa. Kwei-Armah in this regard wants to retain in mind the idea of diversity in Britain. Britain is endowed with people from different ethnic groups, cultures, races and identities. It is obvious for Britain to celebrate this diversity in a contemporary globalized society like Britain rather than discriminating and marginalizing minority communities. The play *Fix up* explores broader issues of Black identity in Britain. This comes as a result of the fact that he receives an award after successfully exploring and bringing to lamp light the problems of first, second and third generation of Black Britons. He deems it necessary to fix up what was not done in *Elmina's Kitchen* which is educating Black Britons about their origin which is more about their cultural identity.

Paul Taylor at the Costtesloe National Theatre London says that:

Kwame Kwei-Armah rightly bagged a most-promising playwright award for Elmina's Kitchen, his provocative look at three generations of black men in Hackney's murder mile. He returns to the Cottesloe with Fix Up, a clearly heartfelt but somewhat creaky piece exploring the broader issue of black identity. In a conformist culture of consumerism, where people are more interested in their hair than their history, who will continue to heed Marcus Garvey's cry that there is no future for a people that deny their past (Taylor,p. 1)

It is evident from the above quotation that the problem of Black Britons is not poverty but education is the what triggers them to identity issue thus it is important to empower them through education than making them rich with an empty brain. Even though Black Americans are poor and considered slaves, their global buying power is high and ranks eleventh in the world. So Nubians are spending serious money. Kwesi wants Brother Kiyi's Bookshop to be a "come one come all" super market. He sees cosmetics business as that which will give much money rather than focusing on one Bookshop that yields no income as narrated by Taylor:

You can't replace history with hair gel, the hero indignantly protests. But the thrust of the play suggests that this process is all too possible. Brother Kiyi, a black intellectual originally named Peter Allan, runs a bookshop in Tottenham whose shelves groan with high-minded tomes about black heritage that precious few people actually buy. Spending his days listening to tapes of Garvey and James Baldwin, this figure with his great mane of greying Rasta dreadlocks is more dreamer than businessm [...] (Taylor 1)

In the play *Fix Up*, Brother Kiyi wanted the place to be a study environment where Niggers can come and acquire knowledge and get out of madness, pain, illiteracy and learn how to fight for a payback from white's slavery and supression. Kwesi tells Brother Kiyi that

he blames the people here who have ignored what this is all about. Why Kiyi should put himself in trouble for those that buy one book a year.

Kiyi: The road to freedom is seldom walked by a multitude (*Kwei-Armah, 2004, p. 146*)

Kwesi tells brother Kiyi that he is into this alone. That road is not being walked by anyone at all because no one supports him yet he fails to see, rather he used emotions to express himself. There is a lesson in that for all of us.

The Lesson: Sometimes you got to do stuff in this world that aren't nice, but if you think that it is right; you got to do (Kwei-Armah, 2004, p.146)

The above dialogue tells us that Brother Kiyi opens a Bookshop in order to get the Black race educated. Despite his efforts, Black Britons prefer come one come all super market where they will buy cosmetics so as to look like the white. Kiyi feels he is doing the right thing because people without history are not cultured and education is the only thing that can bring a change of mentality and a subsequent quest for compensation for slavery and slave trade. If Kwei-Armah had to put into acting the play *Fix Up*, it was for him to appeal to the Black community in Britain to drop crime and violence and stand up for better education so as to empower themselves. Knowing their worth will mean a stop to racism.

It is evident on page 120 of the play *Fix Up* that Black life in Britain is manifested through oppression. They cannot freely discuss issues pertaining to them and their predicaments without the fear of being locked up in prison. While Kwesi and Brother Kiyi are discussing about Michael Jackson and how he bleached his skin, Brother Kiyi asked Kwesi to forgive him. But when Kwesi asked if the whites can be forgiven for slavery, Kiyi warns that Kwesi should be careful so that his words will not take him to prison.

Kwesi: Can the European repent from slavery? The only thing this world understands is "power"

Till we have, no matter what is up there,(pointing to the head) we are just joking.

Brother Kiyi: Good talk Kwesi but make sure your words don't take you where there should not.

Jail life na nice! (Kwei-Armah, 2004, p. 120)

In the same vein, reading *The Slave Narrative* on page 132 of the play *Fix Up*, we come across oppression and voicelessness of Blacks in Britain. The slave narrative recounts the story

of a Black slave girl very pretty and is taken to Grenada by his master (Mr Reynold) and hosted for sex. She puts to birth colour children (mixed race). They both are referred to as niggers. One day the illegitimate nigger children of Mr Reynold went to their father's original home to play. The legitimate children of Mr Reynold called them niggers but they rejected the appellation and told them that they share the same father and he comes to their home every day, feeds and clothes them. In the course of saying this, Mrs Reynold overheard them through the window. That evening the yellow slave girl was flogged for three hours and her children taken from her and sold into slavery. Since then no Black admires to be pretty yellow black girl. (Kwei-Armah 133)

Reading the slave narrative in the play *Fix Up* we are perplexed about Black life in Britain as narrated by Mary Goul

Mary Goul. Grand Anse Estate, Grenada

One day Masser Reynold come back from Barbados wid one high yellow gal he just buy. They say she was real pretty but I can hardly remember. But he never put she to live wid other niggers, no, he buil she a special little house away from the quarters down by the river which runs at the back ah de plantains. Every negroes know masser take a black woman quick as he did a white and took any on his place that he wanted and he took them often. But most his pickney dem born on the place looked like nigger. But not all. Once, two of is yella children went up to the big house where Dr Reynold full-breed child was playing in their dolls' house and told them that he wants to play in the dolls' house too. The story go that one of the Doctor full breed –child say, sorry, this is for white children only" [...] (Kwei-Armah, 2004, p. 132- 133)

From the above narrative, we can see the degree of rage due to racism. The black race have been used as slaves and treated as animals. They are sexually exploited, beaten and sold into slave trade by the white race yet they had neither voice nor right to fight back. The white race are aware of these malpractices that is the reason why they prohibit black history from being taught in schools, they do not want the Black race to know about their past and the atrocities inflicted on them. But Brother Kiyi wants the Black race to get knowledge about this so as to have a say on their history and culture. This is why Kwei-Armah has dramatizes these issues plaguing the Black Community in Britain in order to look for a way forward for the Black race. This impacting piece is further confirmed by Michael Billington in the Guardian News

Michael Billington states on news in December 2004 in The Guardian that:

I missed Kwame Kwei-Armah's Elmina's Kitchen 18 months ago at the Cottesloe, but I begin to understand why it garnered such acclaim. For what is striking about his richly eloquent new play is that it deals with a subject that has specific racial resonances but a wider application: the sacrifice of historical identity to the insatiable demands of brute commerce. (Billington, 2004, p. 1)

Kwei-Armah's hero, Brother Kiyi, runs a Tottenham bookstore dedicated to black history; his shelves, abundantly realised in Bunny Christie's design, teamed with everything from bound volumes on slavery to the works of Garvey, Baldwin and Du Bois. But customers are few, the rent is overdue, and there are plans to turn the store into a shop peddling hair-products. Even though Kiyi is sustained by a sisterly lay-preacher, his troubles multiply when a beautiful young teacher comes out in his store; though whether her needs are educational or emotional remain a root point. What is good is the way Kwei-Armah builds a philosophical argument out of a practical problem. Kiyi's economic need to survive is connected to a passionate, Garveyesque belief that there is no future for a people that deny its past. As he tells his black activist, power-fixated tenant: "What you gonna build if you don't know where you're coming from?" And, even if Kwei-Armah overplays the irony whereby it turns out Kiyi suppressed his own history, he is on to a theme of importance: the collective amnesia that elevates short-term gain above awareness of the past.

Although the play climaxes in a welter of revelations, it has dramatic impetus and universal relevance. Angus Jackson's fine production, adorned by a cappella quartet, also ensures the argument emerges through the characters. Jeffery Kissoon's grey-looking Kiyi has all the prickly gravitas of a man who lives, Prospero-like, through his books. Mo Sesay also gives brilliant, stuttering life to his ex- coke-addict protege. Both Nina Sosanya as the sexily disruptive teacher, and Claire Benedict as the heaven-sent friend, bring their own back-story with them. At one point the hero defiantly claims: "You can't replace history with hair-gel." But Kwei-Armah's conclusion is that, in a world of unfettered capitalism, you all too easily can. This is why Kwei-Armah strikes hard so as to get the voices of the Black race heard through his plays.

In William C. Boles article titled "Fix Up" in January 2005 reviewed that:

While the play mainly mourns the fate of these unappreciated representatives of black culture and history, it also addresses a number of other concerns facing black culture in Britain, including the foregrounding of African American suffering and history over that of British Blacks; the lack of acceptance in the black community of dual heritage

identities; the hypocrisy of a black political movement not invested in the economic struggle of the black individual but instead in the capitalistic values of the surrounding white English society; and the absence of an intellectual black voice amidst a black society more interested in current [...] (Boles, 2005, p. 2)

Kwei-Armah plays present a bleak atmosphere of Black life in Britain. Even when Brother Kiyi wants to foreground the teaching of Black history, he ends up selling out the bookshop and is very much devastated. All hopes are lost when he ends up cutting his hair. Armah's vision is to led the British society know that Blacks really want to do better but are limited in scope in terms of resources and encouragement. It is left for the British government to enact rules which will enable the Black race to fulfill their aspirations. This will go a long way to curb the problem of misrepresentation and racism.

In Phillip Fisher's article titled "Kwame Kwei-Armah" he reviewed that:

Kwame Kwei-Armah's last play Elmina's Kitchen, also in the Cottesloe Theatre, won him an Evening Standard award for most promising playwright. In that Fix Up seems far stronger and has three unforgettable characters, it deserves even better.

It is set in a gigantic Tottenham bookshop run by the magisterial, word-worshipping Brother Kiyi. This is a man with dreadlocks to his knees who believes in Black Power to the exclusion of love and life. Jeffery Kisson delivers a nice mix of pride, passion and, ultimately, defeat with great skill. (Fisher, p. 1)

The above quotation is an acknowledgement of Kwei-Armah's great works and his impact on Black life in Britain. If and only if all Black youth in Britain can watch his plays and get wisdom from there, then both Black life in Britain would be highly represented in that society. Representing the Black race and celebrating differences is important for a contemporary society like Britain most importantly differences in culture, race and identity. Many countries and people all over the world face the issue of identity. Most of them want to identify and be part of the society in which they live. This has been a pertinent issue which needs to be addressed. In order to resolve this issue of identity in a multicultural society, many countries of the world have developed multicultural policies that emphasize the acceptance of cultural diversity. Spontaneously, through these multicultural policy, the respective countries end up integrating minority culture into the mainstream cultural land scape, but very little is being done in preserving the cultural heritage of the minority bearers.

In this regard, some countries such as Canada, Australia and Sweden are seen as powerful advocates of these models in that there are of the opinion that immigrants should not be forced to imbibe, abide by and adapt to the host's traditional culture and values. These countries and advocates of multiculturalism do not hesitate in maintaining that immigrants should be allowed to preserve and practice their own cultural values if they wish to do so for it is culture that gives them a true sense of identity and they can happily belong if their culture is represented. It should be noted by the host country that cultural diversity created by immigrant cultures is seen to be enriching to the host community and is not a threat to their traditional cultures and values (Castles et. Miller 281).

Consequently, for minority or immigrant cultural identities in general and Black British Cultural identities in particular to survive in contemporary multicultural Britain, there is the need for diversity to be prioritized in the country. Shaun Dellenty in his book, *Celebrating Difference: A Whole-School Approach to LGBT+ Inclusion*, he lays out strategies teachers can use to make their classrooms inclusive and compassionate for all school children from diverse family backgrounds. According to the writer, a class and, by extension, a school can be free from any barrier and prejudice if all the stake holders recognize and celebrate all the differences that are found among the children. It is only through this that there can be unity in diversity in the school milieu. By further extension, one can argue that Kwei-Armah in his two plays under study advocates that race should not be a hindrance to identification and cultural coexistence but it should be a push factor to representing all races and celebrating all differences in a multicultural Britain in a largely globalized world today.

This issue of representing and celebrating difference in multicultural societies as a way of respecting and preserving the various cultural identities that coexist in those communities is also supported in strong terms by the American writer Iris Marion Young, when she explains in her book titled *Justice and The Politics of Difference* that;

[...] the importance of social group differences in structuring social relations and oppression; typically, philosophical theories of justice have operated with a social ontology that has no room for a concept of social groups. I argue that where social group differences exist and some groups are privileged while others are oppressed, social justice requires explicitly acknowledging and attending to those group differences in order to undermined oppressions (Young 3).

The quotation attests to the fact that in multicultural communities there are bound to be social difference based on the fact that people living in those communities are products of different cultural realities. When authorities and citizens fail to recognize these differences it

can lead to tension and conflict that will eventually tear the community into camps. It is important for the differences that exist amongst social groups to be recognized and celebrated rather than allow some groups to enjoy certain privileges more than others. This is because by so doing room is created for the privileged groups to oppress the underprivileged. Young's book seeks to show " how such a denial of difference contributes to social group oppression, and to argue for a politics that recognizes rather than represses social difference (Young 10).

Traditionally, Britain is highly conservative as far as her doctrine on national culture is concerned. The country's conservatism tends to limit national reception of foreign cultures which inevitably destroys the free expression of immigrant cultural identities. The British and every other people living in contemporary Britain need a change in the way they see one another's culture and identity. It is important to recognize and represent minority cultures so as to create in them a sense of identity and belonging in a contemporary Britain. Also there is an absolute need for a complete change of mentality by both races so as to inculcate in us the spirit of oneness and togetherness. This will enable citizens to boycott cultural persecution so that everybody can live in a safe multicultural community in which there is a proof that the diversity of race, religion and culture as a whole is a universal value. A complete change in our attitudes towards other cultures; as the American writer, Young observes when she writes that:

Such cultural change occurs partly when despised groups seize the means of cultural expression to redefine a positive image of themselves. In the last twenty years feminist, Black liberation activist, American Indians, disabled people, and other groups oppressed by being marked as fearful bodies have asserted such images of positive difference. [...] (Young 11)

Using examples from contemporary legal debate, including debates about equality and difference in women's liberation, bilingual education, and American Indian rights, she argues that sometimes recognizing particular rights for groups is the only way to promote their full participation. Iris Marion Young also acknowledges fear expressed by some people that such differential treatment again stigmatizes these groups. She shows that it is true only if people of the world continue to understand differences as opposition- identifying equality with sameness and difference with deviance or devaluation.

In the play *Elmina's Kitchen*, the prologue is a staged play in which the performance is a concoction of African traditional music and American blues. Most of the adjectives in act one scene one are directed towards African- American cultural artifacts. This is a clear indication of cultural pluralism. The play presents and respect African traditional ways of life

and the qualities this culture can present. Even though Kwei-Armah takes pleasure in presenting the African culture, he still considers and celebrates American culture despite their differences. This is the kind of society advocated by the playwright that which positively celebrates difference without any form of discrimination, oppression and suppression.

To take into consideration the character Digger, his accent swings from his native Grenadian to hard-core Jamaican and to authentic Black London. Knowing so well that he is Black African, he is able to blend the different languages he has come across due to migration. He speaks creole which is a mixture of variety of native languages. Even though this movement has highly influenced the identity formation of Blacks in Britain, it is left for the British government to accept their differences considering the fact that the entire world has been reduced to a global village.

Stuart Hall understanding of cultural identity allows us to deconstruct and reconstruct who we think we are. To him, if the political events of recent history have taught us anything about cultural identity, it is that the answer to the question of who we are differs radically, depending on who you ask. For some, it remains the unbroken continuum of a common history beneath our differences and languages, while others may concede that we live in a post-identarian reality in which the unending fusion of difference negates the need for cultural identification. In his 1996 essay 'Cultural Identification and Diaspora', the theorist Stuart Hall argued that cultural identity is not only a matter of 'being but of becoming, belonging as much to the future as it does to the past'. From Hall's Perspective identities undergo constant transformation, transcending time and space.

The above explanation is what is demonstrated in Kwei-Armah's plays of focus. Black Britons are caught in the process of deconstruction and reconstruction of their cultural values that defines their identity. In the play *Elmina's Kitchen*, Deli drops his African cultural heritage to build and inculcate the British values in him. This he acts in respect to time and place in which he finds himself. This is shown on page 53 of *Elmina's Kitchen*.

Deli: The need for you to get on the table, start singing blasted rude calypsos and running the blasted customer was what. It was supposed to be an up market launch.

Clifton: (taking the piss) Upmarket launch? It was a party! And when man have party people suppose to dance and not stand up and chat. What the arse is this generation coming to?

Deli: It's the opening of a new West Indian restaurant, Clifton not a blasted shebeen!

Clifton: There was nothing West Indian about it. You have a master Calypsonaian sitting right here, you know, and you and would you let him play? No! We had to mek coup in the name of Culture and take matters into we own hands (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 53)

From the above dialogue, Deli is into a different cultural identity practice unlike his father Clifton who wants the African cultural heritage to be maintained and preserved. This falls in line with Stuart Hall's opinion about cultural identity. These differences have to be respected and celebrated rather than marginalized and oppressed. Kwei-Armah is presently delighted with the changes that have been observed in multiracial and multicultural Britain even though his dreams have been to denounce racism, marginalization, oppression, crime and violence in his plays under study.

In a journal published by Foreign and Commonwealth office of 28 March 2011, Kwame Kwei-Armah declares his intention on Britain's' multiculturalism. In a Foreign Office film launched, British actor and playwright Kwame Kwei-Armah discusses why he believes the United Kingdom (UK) is now the center of the Black diaspora world and how it's a country of diverse cultures. In the film Kwame talks about a television series he presented for Channel 4 in 2009, where he re-created the Queen's 1953/54 tour of the Commonwealth. Kwame discovered that many people across the Commonwealth still thought that the makeup of British society was much like it was in the 1950s as opposed to the diverse, modern nation it is today. Kwame was glad he was chosen to front the programme as he was able to personally vouch for the UK's multiculturalism. Kwame also discusses how proud he is of the progress Britain has made in reducing inequality in society. He thinks Britain today is a tolerant country, comfortable in its own skin, where tradition and modernity can co-exist. If Britain has registered a shift in multicultural and multiracial inequality today, it is thanks to the works of contemporary playwrights such as Kwame Kwei-Armah. Their dramas have impacted the British society in particular and the world in general.

Kwei-Armah has highlighted how interactions between, and Identification with, the United State of America (USA) and countries and Cultures in Africa and the Caribbean have shaped Black British drama since the 1970s. Networks underwritten by race-based Solidarity have emerged from and in response to experiences of racism. The Sustenance of these ties speaks to racism's legacy and regrettably to the persistence of racial inequality. In post-war Britain, black peoples' experiences of marginalization, Un-belonging and rejection from fine imagined Community (Anderson, 1991) of the nation tracing transnational influences in Black

British drama. Racism has affected Black play wrights' ability to access British theatres and, in particular, mainstream stages. It has influenced their thematic explorations and stylistic experiments. Experiences of racism have led playwrights to seek inspirations from wider Cultural context and identify with and speak to a range of International Concerns. Although many plays in this study reveals Black British play-wrights engaging thematically with their local contexts, transnational influences can still be traced in their form and style. If Black British dramatic tradition exist, it is located not in but through the nation in the trans-national frame works.

The trans-national frame works have highlighted how Black British plays since the 1970s draw attention to the ways in which globalization has brought about shifts in patterns of migration, settlements and the ways in which identity, national belonging and citizenship are perceived and practiced. Migration has been and remains a key organizing principle of Black British dramas. Transnational social and Cultural ties and representations are to be expected in plays by representative of first-generation immigrants. In terms of first generation playwrights from the Caribbean, numerous examples have highlighted their engagement with their home land and or the theme of migration. Plays by writers such as Michael Abbenselts and Mustapha Matura documented the emergence of a "West India in British Culture" (1980, 99) and chart the evolution of Britishness and Black Britishness.

However, second generation British writers producing work in the 9090s and early 2000s also draw on their parental homeland Cultures, histories and myth of thematic and stylistic inspiration. Their continued bond and involvement with the Caribbean reiterates that when the process of acculturation is hindered, diasporic ties are strengthened. Plays set in and between the Caribbean reflect a playwrights own positioning inbetween their birth places and their parents' birth places. Their representation often accompanied on stage by a multicultural soundtrack of different accents, underlines the diversity of Black British peoples' genealogies, which encompass different histories, cultures and geographies. Kwame Kwei-Armah's *Elmina's Kitchen* is one of many examples of a Black British play that, despite being set locally, is inflected by transnational ties and situated within global currents by naming the London Café where the play is set.

Contemporary Black British plays draw attention to the current state of the nation and how social and theatre landscapes have changed since the 1950s. Since then, Britain has gradually evolved into a multiracial and arguably a multicultural society. The success of British

multiculturalism is highly contentious especially in light of, among other events, the 7 July 2005 London bombings, the 2005 Birmingham Riots, the death of Mark Dunyan, the 2011 England riots and “Brexit”. It is not the intension to paint an overtly optimistic picture. Never the less, a number of Black British playwrights and practitioners no longer find themselves in the same position of invisibility highlighted by Naseem Khans’ report “The Arts Britain Ignores (1976). By the time, the new time wave of African British Playwrights emerged on theatre scene in the 1990s and particularly in 2000s. Precedents have been set by playwrights such as Kwame Kwei-Armah, Debbie tucker green and Roy Williams in terms of mainstream access and recognition.

That notwithstanding, Black British identity and belonging remains a pertinent issue in Britain. Even though the British government has done much in promoting multiculturalism and multiracial principles within their traditional cultural heritage, Black Britons are still seen as “the in-between”. Kwei-Armah’s *Vision* is to show to the world that Black Britons are not represented and integrated in Britain because of racism, marginalization, crime, violence and illiteracy.

In *Elmina’s Kitchen*, Deli practiced and followed the white ways but ended up hopeless. He finds a means to go back to Africa and establish a life because he sees himself as a stranger in Britain. This is a recurrent incident in the life of Deli at the end of the play where he expressed his desire to go back home despite his willing desire to give in to practicing the mainstream culture.

Ashley: you didn’t have to inform the police Dad. Where did you ever have to go to the world and come back and not have to look at your shoulders?

Deli: That’s not better than being into prison?

Ashley: Is still prison, just bigger cells.

Deli: Well, I have been in the cell, son and it is not very nice. Each generation supposed to top the previous one. If I have to die on the street to get you out of that dere runnings would I not be doing my job?

Ashley: I don’t believes you did this?

Deli: I did, now listen to me. The police are going to arrest Digger today, but they’re only gonna be able to hold him for fourty-eight hours. After he’s released, he’s gonna know that I shoped him, then he’s going to come right here and deal with me.

Ashley: You’re damn right he will!

Deli: But if you speak to the police and say that you will testify that Digger told you to do all that happened that night, we will get fifty grand and a safe house out of the country. Coupled with the money I already have, when we ready we could fly back home and live the life of king (Kwei-Armah, 2003, p. 93)

It can be seen in the dialogue that Black life in Britain is full of uncertainty and hopelessness. Deli who is seen throughout the play as a real British Black wants to relocate to where he feels is home at the end of the play. This is something that his father has proposed that they do but he rejected his father's proposal. His plans for going to the police is to ensure that he gets paid and should be given a free house so that he can relocate to a new environment (Going back home and making money so that he can become a king and respectable personality unlike what he is in Britain).

Still in Kwei-Armah's play *Fix Up*, identity and belonging become a question of race. Brother Kiyi throughout the play plays along with who he actually is. He forges an identity which makes him fatherless and wifeless. It is at the end of the play that his real identity is revealed. This irony might have been prompted by the pains and humiliation inflicted on Blacks by white Britons.

Brother Kiyi: I do not hate. disappointed, maybe. Hurt, possibly but I don't hate. I love my community.

Alice: You're making me want to throw up! What do you know about love? You leave your child to rot, to be raised by the very people you are educating your community against and you talk about love? What did you built for me?

Brother Kiyi: I 'm not educating my people against anybody, I'm teaching them to love themselves.

Alice: I'AM YOUR CHILD!

Brother Kiyi: You know that' exactly what your mother would do to me. Twist me up. Lose her temper and start to scream and I would not know what to do. It's her spirit in you come to hunt me, innit? You come to hunt me Chantella?

Alice: My name is Alice!

Brother Kiyi: Your mother named you Chantella. (Kwei-Armah, 2004, p. 163)

In the dialogue, identity and belonging are at the center of this saga caused by slavery, slave trade and racism. As earlier mentioned, Brother Kiyi does not reveal his true identity to his compatriots. It is evident from the dialogue that he has been injured in the early part of his life, thus knows no love. In the same vein, Alice does not know her true identity. Her birth name is Chantella but her foster parents call her Alice. It is through her biological father that she discovers who actually she is. Being a mixed race, she was taken away just like a slave.

The impacts of slavery, slave trade and racism have greatly influenced Brother Kiyi's life in particular and Black British life in general. Alice even though a mixed race (commonly called hybrids) belongs to the category of Afro-Caribbean Black. This explains why after many years of her upbringing, she ends up tracing her roots as Black and wants to learn more about Black Culture in Brother Kiyi's bookshop.

Finally, this chapter has attempted to throw more light on Kwei-Armah's preoccupation in revamping a conservative British society in which the Black race is pushed to the margins and oppressed. Not being able to freely integrate and belong to the society in which they live, Black British playwrights such as Kwame Kwei-Armah are so concerned with getting the Black race recognized and represented. In his two plays under study, he targeted issues such as racism, discrimination, differentiation, marginalization, oppression, slavery and slave trade which have been detrimental in the construction of a multicultural and multiracial society like Britain. Kwei-Armah in his two plays under study is not only disgruntled about the racist regime in Britain and the world at large but is not happy with third generation Black Britons who are very reluctant about education given that education is the greatest weapon which can empower the Black race and bring them out of poverty, inferiority complex and crime. These plays have impacted Black lives and situations in Britain but the Black race in Britain are highly recommended to focus more on education especially on their history and culture that defines them. This will enable them to be represented in Britain. Once the Black race is highly represented it will go a long way to enhance multiracial and cultural celebration.

It is evident in the plays that despite the struggle for Blacks to identify and belong to the society, most of the characters end in desperation. Take an example of Deli who tries to copy the white ways, he does not actually achieve his goal of becoming a part and parcel of British society. Also, Ashley who is an escapist from the British decent life style lived by the father but prefers to live a dirty live style of crime and gun and even ends up being killed by his mentor Digger. In the play *Fix Up* Brother Kiyi does not achieve his goal of opening a bookshop so as to get the Blacks educated. He ends up selling the bookshop for a come one come all super market. This goes a long way to state that Kwei-Armah's plays exposed the problems of Blacks in Britain but fails to propose concrete solutions to these problems. I think the best way for Blacks to get an identity and belonging is for Britain to accept all races and cultures, to introduce Black history and formal education for Blacks in British schools and finally celebrate difference in culture and race without any form of discrimination, oppression and suppression.

Identity has been an important issue in contemporary Britain where there has been an ongoing struggle to redefine both “Britishness” and the nature of a desirable, culturally diverse society. The factors that have influenced this research work include identity and belonging, racism, migration, globalization, the development of a widespread moral and cultural pluralism, and an increasing degree of integration within Europe. For black people in Britain, a very crucial factor is racism, which has both shaped their relationship to Britishness and produced various forms of resistance. Writing, together with other forms of black cultural production such as film and performance, is an important site for the articulation of old and new forms of Black identity and for exploring the place of black people in Britain. In Stuart Hall’s essay on new Caribbean cinema, “Cultural Identity and Diaspora,” Stuart Hall argues that recent diasporic Black cultural production is “putting the issue of cultural identity in question.” “Who,” Hall asks, “is this emergent, new subject of the cinema? From where does he/she speak?” Similar questions could be asked of recent black British writings. Hall suggests that creative practices such as cinema, or in this case writings are important, not as reflections of an already existing black identity, but in the production of identities. He argues. These questions are related to what Kwei-Armah brainstorms in his plays under study. He has succinctly demonstrated the issue of race, identity and belonging to a multicultural Britain.

These issues have been adressed from two theoretical stand points which include New Historicism and Cultural Studies. These approaches have been very instrumental in the interpretation of Black British problems in that through New Historicism, we are enlightened about the history and origin of Black Britons which has shaped their identity and the formation of hybrid identity. Further into the approach of Cultural Studies, we cannot talk of peoples’ identity without talking of their culture because it is their culture that shapes and identifies them. Through Cultural Studies, Black Britons are able to assert African Cultural values that define them as people of the Black race. In an attempt to solve issues of identity and belonging in Britain, it has been cleared that racism is one of the recurring hindrance to this protest, while lack of education, poverty and misrepresentation are fast playing a role. It is crystal clear that Britains’ conservatism has played a role in identity and belonging issue, if Britain can accept and celebrate difference it will go a long way to get the Black race represented.

Situating the post-World War II mass migration of Afro-Caribbean to Britain in the context of transatlantic political movements for citizenship and self-determination, Perry chronicles how migrants “reconfigured the boundaries of what it meant to be both Black and British” while living and working in the imperial metropolis. Unwilling to accept second-class

citizenship, Afro-Caribbean migrants formed grassroots organizations to protest racial discrimination, lobbied for legal reform, and repurposed popular Caribbean festivals to secure to their rights as British citizens

Kennetta Hammond Perry in her book titled *London is a Place for Me* states that:

. If we think about how Kitchener is articulating a claim about belonging and a sense of rightfulness to be in London, the imperial metropolis, it allows us to connect his story to earlier Black activists like Harold Moody and his work with The League of Coloured Peoples in the 1930s and 1940s. For Moody, part of the work of The League of Coloured Peoples involved advocating for people of color and, in particular, people of African descent who resided in the U.K. He was very much concerned with his dual identity as a Black man and as a British subject. (Perry, p. 2)

In the quotation, it is evident and normal for Black Britons to advocate for an identity which will get them represented in Britain politically, socially, economically and above all culturally. This will get them identified and give them a sense of belonging in Britain. In her book, she also wanted to draw attention to the larger imperial context shaping postwar Afro-Caribbean migrants' claims to Britishness, which she argues was part and parcel of post-emancipation imperial politics. The British Empire quite literally created a type of discourse about subject hood and imperial belonging that people of African descent were able to retool for their purposes in the colonies to make claims about citizenship and to assert rights and identifications economically, socially, politically, and culturally. So what we see in the postwar period is not necessarily new. Rather, it is simply one of the ways to borrow from one the foundational collections in Black British cultural studies that the "Empire strikes back" in a postwar context marked by the realities of imperial decline. He tries to map out some of those connections and pay attention to the ways in which a focus on Black British political activity sheds light on what scholars including Paul Gilroy, Bill Schwarz and Jordanna Bailkin have described as a type of social and cultural process of decolonization that takes place in the imperial metropolis.

That notwithstanding, the contemporary multicultural British community is solely concerned with the mother culture. The mother culture has vastly swallowed minority cultures in an attempt to protect and safeguard the British cultural values. This is as a result of the fact that people's culture is very significant to the people and judging from the fact that culture predicts peoples' identity, it becomes vital for bearers to keenly protect it from being influenced by different cultural identities because they have built it for many years. The British community

therefore holds tight to its conservative cultural identity because it makes them unique as British people. Since Britain fervently hangs on and protects their cultural identity it becomes extremely difficult for immigrants and minority cultural groups to succeed in maintaining their cultural values and preserving their heritage and cultural identities in such a tense cultural community. Applying critical tools such as Cultural Studies and New Historicism to analyze British Cultural conservatism, racism and identity issue, Kwame Kwei-Armah's voice and that of other Black British playwrights have been made public and their lamentations have been heard by Britain in particular and the world in general.

Kwei-Armah in a way questions the fate of Black Britons in Britain. Black cultural identity is consistently threatened in this culturally complex contemporary British society. Migrant cultures are constantly marginalized and suppressed by mainstream culture. Most often, migrants themselves such as Caribbeans, Asians and Africans readily compromise their cultural heritage in order to adopt and adapt to the mainstream culture which has been presented to them as superior and civilized. However, most of these Black Britons end up failing to completely get culturally transformed into becoming pure Britons as they would have loved to be. Rather they undergo a kind of acculturation or simply become hybrids. It is important to bring to draw a general conclusion with focus on each and every chapter of the study.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

In the history of Black Britons, identity and belonging has posed a lot of questions. This is probably because Britain as a country has valued and preserved her culture so much such that any attempt to implement other cultures have proved abortive. Britain is portrayed as a racist country because the Black race in Britain has not been able to integrate Black cultural values into Britains' cultural space. It is demonstrated in the the afore-mentioned chapters how Kwei-Armah portrays identity and belonging in *Elmina's Kitchen and Fix Up* as a major concern. It is consistently argued in the study that contemporary Britain conserves her culture so much such that other cultures find it difficult to integrate in the society. Considering the fact that culture determines identity, the Black race in Britain does not seem to belong because they are not given the privilege to showcase their culture. It is revealed that, in such a culturally complex community like Britain, subordinate cultures are marginalised by the host culture.

In contemporary British community, the mother culture has almost completely swallowed other sojourn cultures. It is worthy of note that a people's culture has got a life time importance to the people since culture provides and signifies an identity, it becomes vital for bearers to jealously protect it from influence by other external cultural characteristics. The British community therefore holds tight to its conservative cultural identity because they have built it for years and it makes the British unique from other people. Since Britain passionately hangs to and protects their cultural identity, it is extremely difficult for migrant and minority cultural groups to succeed in maintaining their cultural values and preserving their heritage and cultural identity in a tense cultural community. With the use of critical tools such as Cultural Studies and New Historicism, Kwei-Armah's voice on Britains' cultural conservatism has been analysed.

The fate of Black Britons who make up this contemporary community is questioned by Kwei-Armah. The survival of Black identity is highly and consistently threatened in this very culturally complex British society. Migrant culture which identifies them continue to get marginalised and suppressed by the mainstream culture. In most cases Carribean, Asian and African migrants readily compromise their cultural heritage to adopt and adapt to mainstream

culture which has been presented to them as a superior and civilised culture. That notwithstanding, most Black Britons end up failing to completely get culturally transformed into becoming pure Britons as they would have loved to; rather they undergo some sort of acculturation or simply become cultural hybrids.

Chapter one titled “Theoretical Frameworks and Review of related Literature” examined the Theoretical Framework and review of Related Literature. The chapter discussed Theoretical Frameworks. It highlighted cultural studies with New Historicism as the supporting theoretical paradigm for the analysis and interpretation of identity and belonging in Kwei-Armah’s drama texts. The chapter also presented a review of Related Literature. It worked on the different opinions expressed by different critics on Kwame Kwei-Armah’s works. In this chapter it is argued that New Historicism and Cultural Studies are perfect frameworks which have been used in the analysis of Kwame Kwei-Armah’s *Elmina’s Kitchen* and *Fix Up*. Cultural Studies have been used alongside New Historicism because they share common characteristics. These critical frames shared common characteristics such as history, culture, identity, and race. These frames have enabled us to understand Black British history through literature and literature through its cultural context. This chapter has highlighted the relevance of these theories to the study. It has further highlighted specific tenets of the respective theories applied in the analysis of the texts. The chapter has also reviewed the critical opinions in existing literature on Kwame Kwei-Armah’s works in general and *Elmina’s Kitchen* and *Fix Up* specifically as regarding identity and Belonging in Black British drama. This has helped to trace the root cause of the problems of Black Britons. It has also brainstormed on the different opinions of people on how to go about these problems.

Chapter two established a link between Black British identity in a multicultural Britain in relation to the historical experiences of Black Britons and how these are reflected in literature. The chapter attempted to trace Black British identity in relation to its social and political history, taking cognizance of the fact that they have moved from one cultural heritage to another before finally settling as Black British people. The chapter further pointed out the different elements that identify Black British people. These elements included ethnicity and the various cultural elements found in the Text *Fix Up* and *Elmina’s Kitchen*. Approached from a theoretical perspective, the chapter revealed that New Historicism and Cultural Studies are closely related to each other in the sense that through history we can situate culture to time and place therefore it enabled us to know that culture identifies a given people of a given place at a given time. It also reiterates the influence of time changing on the culture of the people.

Through history, it is made known that Black Britons have migrated as slaves, servants, soldiers and merchants into Britain and are introduced to new Culture which is not the culture of their heritage. This has resulted to a consistent struggle between their original cultural identities and imposed cultural identity. History does not let go our past experiences but serves as a link between the past, present and future experiences. These past historical experiences is the reason why Black Britons are seen as “neither-nors” who keep fighting for a cultural representation.

Chapter three dwelled on “The complexity of Black British Identity”. It discussed the politics of race and belonging. The chapter examined the complexity of Black British identity in *Elmina’s Kitchen* and *Fix Up*. Black Britons do not actually know who they are and where they belong; they are neither Africans nor British people. The chapter further discussed the vibrancy of Black Culture and the challenges it faces at the cross-cultural level. It can be categorically stated that Black Britons’ main challenge today is identity and belonging as is the case in the two plays under study. First, second and third generation Black Britons have been part and parcel of Britain for many decades. It is clear that most of them are born and breathe in Britain. As a matter of fact they do not even know their origin. It became a hard pill for them to know that they are not represented because they are considered slaves; they want to get to their roots but find it difficult to trace their respective countries of origin. The result has been to get them represented in the society in which they are and also to make it a home irrespective of the difference surrounding them. Kwei-Armah as a playwright has been caught up in this web of complex identity, so through his texts under study, he wants the world to acknowledge their plea for help.

Chapter four grappled with “Cultural Hegemony Versus Multicultural Integration”. It explained that British Cultural conservatism which imposed cultural hegemony on sojourn cultures rendered multicultural integration in Britain, especially Black British Culture difficult. The chapter examined the various factors that propagate British cultural hegemony including cultural conservatism and the challenges it encountered by other cultures. It focused on cultural integration aimed at denouncing cultural domination and racism by white British over the years. For the past decades, Britain’s cultural hegemony has caused the Black race to compromise their Black culture for the white culture which is considered superior and civilized culture. This has been a hindrance to Black British cultural identity because they can not proudly boast of Black British culture but have to reluctantly accept the mainstream in which they are marginalized as people of the Black race. This has brought about a decry of the playwright through his dramatic vision.

Chapter five is presented as “Kwei-Armah’s dramatic vision”. In the chapter, misrepresentation, suppression, marginalization, racism, and differentiation by the white race against the black race have pushed Black British writers such as Kwei-Armah to write back and expose the challenges faced by Black Britons. He appeals for human equality with the hope that all races be represented in a contemporary society like Britain. In his dramatic vision, he made the world to know that all cultures are loved and cherished by indigeneous population. Note should be taken that Kwei-Armah’s plays under study present a racist culture in which second generation Blacks in Britain find themselves. Considering their experiences, this second generation Blacks found out that their identity construction is neither British nor that of their country of origin. They have come across a number of cultures which have created in them a mix culture which is not represented anywhere in Britain. These mixed cultures have given birth to hybrid cultures which are in no way welcome in Britain. Kwei-Armah proposed that the British government should stop racism, consider and respect Black cultural values. If this is considered, Black Britons will stand a great chance to be part of the British society with the identity that defined them. On the other hand, Kwei-Armah sent a strong message to Black Britains that education is a catalyst to issues plaguing the society so they should get education in order to be free from violence and crime as a way forward. The best way to solve identity and belonging issue in Britain is for Britain to celebrate difference.

In order to address the various Cultural identity problems and prejudices experienced in multicultural communities in contemporary Britain and the world at large it is left for bearers of minority cultural identity to recognize their uniqueness and that both the administration and bearers of host Culture have to recognize and accept difference. It should be noted that difference is not necessary opposition but variety. This will be of great importance in the sense that such an understanding of variety will inevitably create a friendly atmosphere for tolerance which will eventually lead to coexistence of diverse cultures. It is through celebrating and encouraging differences that we create in Black Britons the spirit of belonging, subsequently a peaceful coexistence in a culturally diverse society.

Kwei-Armah as a playwright is a victim of racism, discrimination, oppression and misrepresenttation. Going by his biography, we are made to understand and confirm this allegation. He has lived with these experiences which are not just limited to Britain but to most multi-racial and multicultural societies in general. This must have been the reason why he drawled inspirations and is motivated by global cultural changes that are being witnessed by

postmodern contemporary society. In the midst of all these confusions and uncertainties, Kwei-Armah opines that all the people comprising of the British society including people of different races and cultures have come to an understanding that they may have diverse origins, speak different languages, manifest different cultural heritage but share common and similar human characteristics. It is therefore imperative for the government and citizens of Britain to fight against racism, xenophobia and other forms of discrimination that may arise as a result of the fact that some people look different, eat, and dress differently from others. It is also important to fight against elements such as health issues, gender inequality, political crisis, cybercrimes, homosexuality and human trafficking. These elements if addressed properly would bring together diverse cultural groups and give them a common identity and a sense of belonging. Britain should bear in mind that celebrating difference does not necessarily mean cultures are opposed to each other but that harmony can be attained in such a culturally diversified society.

Race in Britain should not be a determining factor for a common national and cultural identity. Resolving issues of race and other common factors threatening world peace and solidarity in modern societies would go a long way to bind the world's cultural groups together and give them a common identity and a sense of belonging in a multicultural society. This, on the one hand, will guarantee a certain degree of integration for immigrants and the other hand create space for tolerance and acceptance of foreign values by the host communities. In as much as the cultural practices and traditions of immigrants are only divergent but do not go against the cultural values and traditions of the host communities, both parties will be able to find a common ground for a peaceful coexistence.

It is only through collective efforts that we can attain the state of peaceful coexistence whereby people from different groups and works of live who cohabit in a particular community are glued together and lived in harmony with one another without some groups looking down on others. It is in this respect that Dr Farhan Samanani in his report titled "The Cumberland Lodge" writes:

This Cumberland Lodge Report marks the culmination of a 12-month project to explore how inequality, identity and belonging intersect with race in Britain today. Inequality, Identity & Belonging draws on the wisdom and experience of an interdisciplinary representation of academics, policymakers, business leaders, NGOs, community practitioners and activists, and young people, from across the UK. It offers a unique insight into current thinking and best practice, and a series of practical, policy-focused recommendations for promoting progress towards more peaceful, open and inclusive societies. (Dr Samanani, p. 1)

From the above report we are made to understand that, policy makers, business leaders, NGOs, community practitioners and activists, young people across the UK offer a unique insight into current thinking and best practice and a series of practical, policy-focused recommendations for promoting progress towards more peaceful, open and inclusive societies. This has been the cry of Black Britons and other immigrants in Britain; living together in harmony, and celebrate differences without any form of racism and misrepresentation.

Identity and belonging to a multicultural society is not only limited to what goes on in Britain but is extended to other parts of the world. It should be noted that race is the obvious factor which paves the way for discrimination, oppression, suppression and misrepresentation. Taking the example of racism in the United State of America, Blacks are constantly maltreated, humiliated, differentiated and killed because they are considered second class citizens in America. Even in present day America, Black Americans are still in constant struggle to negotiate their identity as Americans and celebrate their culture. They are rather acculturated even though their labour and energy as immigrated slaves is what made America what it is today. Racism in America has created a lot of issues and killing. George Flod's murder in Minneapolis in May 2020 sparked the largest racial justice protests in the United States since the Civil Rights Movement. But the movement went far beyond this nation's borders; it inspired a global reckoning with racism.

In the year 2020, countries across the globe had some of the largest Black Lives Matter protests in their history, all inspired by the video of Floyd brutal death in police custody on May 25, 2020. Crossing continents and cultures, Black activists saw Floyd's death as a symbol of the intolerance and injustice they face at home. Some of these countries had their own George Floyd, a Black person whose death by police brutality or racial violence created national outrage. Everywhere, activists knew there was no going back to the way things were before they witnessed Floyd's final moments. This led to a harmonized call for a stop to racism, oppression and discrimination against the black race.

Kwei-Armah in *Elmina's Kitchen* and *Fix UP* is concerned with the fact that racism in Britain has wiped out mainstream Black British cultural expression and identity. Blacks are not represented in Britain where they have considered home to them nor are they welcome in their countries of origin. They see themselves as neither nor but feels that as Blacks in Britain, they

should be well treated and culturally represented in the society in which they live without any form of racism. This will create in them a sense of belonging.

Kwei- Armah's childhood and life experiences in both Britain and the United State of America have greatly shaped his writings or his plays including his approach to identity, race and cultural representation. When he looked back to his life as a youth, Kwei-Armah expressed a profound sense of dislocation:

When I was young I never had a home. I used to call myself at sixteen famously a 'universal alien'. When I walked out on the streets in London, they'd say 'Go back home, you black bastard.' When I went to the West Indies they'd say, 'You're English.' When I go to Africa, they say 'Go home. Look at you, Bob Marley.' I'd never had a home until I discovered that I was an African and that actually I was a diasporic African. (Davis, 2006, p. 247)

For a number of black people growing up in Britain during the 1960s and 1970s, the paucity of black role models, lack of a mainstream black British cultural presence, no precedent of a critical mass of British-born Blacks and a racist environment meant that youths had to look elsewhere for their cultural and political reference points. This, combined with widespread assumptions that blacks born in Britain were not really 'British', opened the door to African American identification, particularly among activists and artists, and coincided with the ascendancy of black American popular culture in the USA and its global dissemination.

The Black Power movement in the USA and its legacy had a fundamental impact on Black British political organisation, cultural expression and identity (GunningI and Ward, 2009; Malchow, 2011; Wild, 2008). A key aspect of Black Power politics was an Afrocentric world-view. Afrocentrism has broad interpretations. Tunde Adeleke defines it as a racially essentialist ideology that uses Africa in order 'to advance a monolithic and homogeneous history, culture, and identity for all Blacks, regardless of geographical location' (2009, pp. 10–11). Stephen Howe, on the other hand, highlights its less extreme interpretations that place 'an emphasis on shared African origins among all "black" people, taking a pride in those origins and an interest in African history and culture – or those aspects of New World cultures seen as representing African "survivals" and a belief that Eurocentric bias has blocked or distorted knowledge of Africans and their cultures' (1998, p. 1). Nevertheless, fundamental to both interpretations is the notion of the African diaspora.

. Indeed, it is in Black America that we see the dominant influences that have shaped Kwei-Armah's identity, politics and art.

Similarly, Black America has had an important influence on his creative output. In a number of his plays, the African American experience provides the starting point for Kwei-Armah's engagement with the black situation in Britain: The title of his play *Let There Be Love* is taken from Nat King Cole's version of the song and uses its message of harmony and compassion in a plea against prejudice and intolerance of minorities in Britain; *Seize the Day* revolves around a candidate in the running to become London's first Black mayor and was inspired by the election of Barack Obama in 2008 as the first African American President of the USA.

At this point, it is understood that there is no human without identification in a society which he thinks he is part of it. In case of no national or cultural identification, the individual is always in constant battle to get himself sorted. This is the case of Black life in Britain whereby they feel that in a multicultural society like Britain, all cultures should be equally represented without racial segregation. Taking cognisance of the fact that culture shapes and identifies a given people, it is obvious that Britain should reconsider multiculturalism and work towards a peaceful coexistence which should be aimed at getting all races represented and therefore celebrate differences. This will boost up Black educational standard and enable them to be more responsible. This also will reduce crime wave practiced by Blacks in Britain because they will feel that they are part of the British society.

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