

## **Transculturation and black Africans' Integration in British Society: A Postcolonial Reading of Alex Wheatle's *The Dirty South***

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**Abstract:** Although contemporary society is made up of the interaction of cultures, Europeans always categorise black people and their culture as being inferior. In fact, they are often victims of multiple racial attitudes from Europeans during their contacts. Writers like Alex Wheatle denounce this unfair categorisation in black British literature through the representation of Africans' living conditions and their struggle to survive. His work, *The Dirty South* (2008) set in the United Kingdom, unveils the harsh integration system with which the ethnic minority is confronted in Brixton. Framed by the concept of Transculturation, the paper aims at showing the difficulties of young black Africans in shifting from their culture to the British racial system of integration in Britain. This study reveals that black British are culturally alienated, since they are often obliged to abandon their own culture and identity to adopt a foreign culture.

**Key words:** Culture, Transculturation, Integration, Racism, identity.

**Résumé:** Bien que la société contemporaine soit constituée de l'interaction des cultures, les Européens rejettent les Noirs et leur culture comme étant inférieurs. En effet, ils sont souvent victimes de multiples attitudes raciales de la part des Européens lors de leurs rencontres. Des écrivains comme Alex Wheatle dénoncent cette catégorisation injuste dans la littérature noire britannique à travers la représentation des conditions de vie des Africains et de leur lutte pour survivre. Son œuvre *The Dirty South* (2008), qui se déroule au Royaume-Uni, dévoile le mauvais système d'intégration auquel la minorité ethnique est confrontée à Brixton. A travers le concept de Transculturation, cet article vise à montrer les difficultés rencontrées par les jeunes Africains noirs à abandonner leur culture pour se soumettre au système racial d'intégration britannique en Grande-Bretagne. Cette étude révèle que les Noirs britanniques sont culturellement aliénés puisqu'ils sont parfois obligés de rejeter leur propre culture et identité pour adopter une culture étrangère.

**Mots clés:** Culture, Transculturation, Intégration, Racisme, identité.

## Introduction

The thirst for cultural hegemony in European society always raises multiple debates on the issue of identity. White people claim their culture and superiority through a negative representation of non-European culture and tradition. Frantz Fanon summarizes this conception of black people by stating: “Europeans consider themselves as superior.” (F. Fanon, 1967, p.12), For them, any other culture is worth practicing than that of Europeans. The Black British writer Alex Wheatle in his work *The Dirty South* portrays this ideology as a racist system against which the minority group in British society struggles to survive. Written in 2008, the novel relates the problem of integration and other kinds of difficulties that black British face in Britain. In order to find a social balance, black British, like Caribbeans, Africans, Jamaicans and Indians, mainly considered as ethnic minorities, are obliged to embrace western culture.

Many scholars have written on the issue of that cultural interaction. Homi Bhabha in his work *The Location of Culture* (1994) discusses the concept of hybridity and focuses on the way cultural mixing creates new identities. This notion performs a similar critical function with the concept of “transculturation,” since it describes the cultural negotiation, translation, and transformation that occur in colonial and postcolonial encounters. As far as Ash Amin and Nigel Thrift are concerned, they examine the way in which urban spaces facilitate cultural interaction and the complexities that arise from multiculturalism in their work, *Cities: Reimagining the Urban*. The last one that also draws our attention is Wendy Brown’s “The Multiculturalism of Fear.” Like the other academic work mentioned above, she analyses the complexities and challenges of multiculturalism.

Here, these critics all deal with cultural diversity, which is often the result of globalization.

In this work, we will put the emphasis on the complexity of integration in British society, mainly the case of the minority group. In other words, this analysis will demonstrate that the minority group is obliged to shift from a culture to another, hence the cultural transformation.

In Alex Wheatle ‘s *The Dirty South*, Dennis Huggins, the main narrator, Noel Gordon and many other black British have been victims of this cultural transformation. For the study to reach its goal, I make use of the postcolonial theory through the concept of transculturation, hybridity and cultural integration. These cultural aspects are given an insight by critics like Edward Said, Homi

Bhabha and Arjun Appadurai who contribute to the understanding of cultural interaction or cultural mix.

## **1- The Transculturation of Black British in *The Dirty South***

Transcultural theories have been deployed and engaged since 1940, when the Cuban scholar Fernando Ortiz coined the term “transculturation” to describe the process of “mutual ...cultural influences and fusions between .... ‘peripheral’ and colonising cultures.” (F. Ortiz, 1995, p. 10) From this passage, we can state that the concept of transculturation is crucial in understanding the complex dynamics of cultural exchange, particularly in postcolonial contexts. Besides, the term itself is widely discussed by various theorists, like Frantz Fanon, Homi Bhabha, and Edward Said. They all deal with the same issue and show the way transculturation shapes identity, power and resistance. Then, this part will highlight how cultural transformation affects young Black education in British society.

### **1.1. Transculturation and Young Black Education**

In *Black Skin, White Masks*, Frantz Fanon explores transculturation in the context of colonialism and its impacts on the colonized subject. Fanon focuses on how colonialism forced the colonized people to adopt the culture of the colonizer in order to survive or gain social acceptance. For him, it is not that “the Negro makes himself inferior. But the truth is that he is made inferior” (F. Fanon, 1967, p. 149). This process involves a violent imposition of the coloniser’s values, language and norms, which leads to the colonized subject’s alienation from their own culture. Leela Gandhi is then right to state that “[t]his colonialism colonises minds in addition to bodies and it releases forces within colonised societies to alter their cultural priorities once and for all.” (Gandhi, 2018, p. 16)

From the same point of view, transculturation also refers to complex and often conflict-ridden interactions between cultures, particularly in the context of colonialism, imperialism and postcolonial struggle. These critiques address how culture influences, resists and reshapes each other under the pressure of colonial histories with a focus on identity, power and resistance. From

this perspective, Alex Wheatle's *The Dirty South* analyses the cultural adaptation of Black British and how they adjust to a new culture, often due to migration, displacement or social marginalisation. Bill Ashcroft et al strengthened this point at the beginning of their introduction of *Empire Write Back* by stating that "More than three-quarters of the people living in the world today have had their lives shaped by the experience of colonialism." (B. Ashcroft et al, 2004, p. 1) By saying this, these critics invite readers to see colonialism as the root of all those cultural alienation and other kinds of injustices that black people face in European societies. As far as black British are concerned, they often find this colonialism as being the result of their struggle, adaptation and survival.

From the same perspective, young Black's education through the protagonist Dennis is totally different from what they experience in the streets of Brickyard. Dennis for example receives both a good academic and family education. This is clear in this passage when he claims: "The English Tutor said I should write my tale and she offered her help. But burn her help, I don't need it (...) 'cos I am black she didn't think I could write too good, didn't think I had an academic brain." (A. Wheatle, 2008, p. 1), Having "an academic brain" here means that Dennis has received a good academic education. Although British society considers black minorities as inferior and poor, who cannot think like white people, Dennis Huggins subverts this ideology through the writing of his tale. He has even rejected the assistance of "The English Tutor" that he considers useless. The tale Dennis writes becomes a crucial act of self-expression in a world that rarely listens to boys like him. This academic achievement shows that Dennis is more than the label of "juvenile delinquent" that British society has placed on him and other black people. By putting pen to paper, he begins to see himself not just as a victim of racism but also as someone with the power to think critically, create, and reflect.

It also symbolizes not only his emotional awakening but also the power of storytelling as a form of resistance, healing, and identity formation. Through this tale, the narrator illustrates how creative expression allows marginalized individuals to reclaim their narratives and envision new possibilities for themselves. Beyond personal expression, Dennis's tale also functions as a form of resistance against the oppressive forces that define black British's reality. He uses the tale to connect all black minorities to a wider cultural and historical tradition of Black storytelling. Throughout history, African and Caribbean cultures have preserved their heritage, resistance, and

wisdom through oral and written narratives. Dennis, by writing his tale, becomes part of this tradition. His story carries the weight of his ancestors' struggles, but also their resilience. In a society that tries to erase Black voices, Dennis's storytelling is a form of cultural affirmation. It reminds readers that language, creativity, and expression are powerful tools for reclaiming identity.

As far as his family education is concerned, Dennis' mother always takes care of him and makes sure that her son behaves in a tidy way. Dennis himself confirms this in the following quotation: "When I was a kid, she always checked me from scalp to toe making sure I was neat and shit to go out." (A. Wheatle, 2008, p. 2). The attention Dennis receives from his mother, in this extract, plays a crucial role in shaping his identity, values, and emotional development. While much of Dennis's life is marked by instability and institutionalization, his brief but significant contact with his parents introduces him to a different kind of education. The one rooted in cultural awareness, emotional connection, and a sense of heritage. This interaction helps him begin to understand who he is beyond the labels and systems imposed on him by social services and British racial society. His parents particularly, offered him insight into his roots, giving him a sense of belonging and identity that the care system never provided. This is a vital form of education, like learning where he comes from and why that matters.

I didn't really have a bad argument with my parents until I left school at sixteen. Paps was vex at the time, waving his walking stick in my face telling me 'education is the key,' trying to convince me to go college. He 's always told me that education is the key phrase as far back as I can remember (...) 'education is the key, education is the key, (A. Wheatle, 2008, p. 4),

This quotation highlights the value of familial and cultural education in shaping a young person's sense of self and future potential. Dennis's father shares with him values and life experiences that subtly introduce Dennis to the complexities of being a Black man in Britain. This includes lessons about resilience, pride in one's heritage, and understanding systemic racism. Their conversations do not come in the form of formal lectures but through stories and expressions of lived experience, namely an education that helps Dennis begin to critically examine his environment. It also shows the willingness of Dennis' parents to teach him that education is one of the best values a person should acquire. Hence, the good family education he receives from his parents. He even

gives the reader an idea of his living standard when he states: “Life was comfortable growing up. I always got the Nike trainers I wanted, which was the important thing and I didn’t have to queue up with the free dinner ghetto kids at school.” (A. Wheatle, 2008, p.4).

All this evidence shows that black British face a transcultural situation in Britain, since they are well educated but often oblige to adopt another culture for a matter of integration in British society. We clearly notice that black British characters in *The Dirty South* embody the fusion of African, Caribbean, and British cultures, representing a transcultural identity. These characters navigate multiple cultural terrains, constantly balancing their Caribbean, African, Jamaican and Indian heritage with their British identity. This blend of cultures creates a complex situation for some black families who have educated their children according to their own cultural values. In fact, Alex Wheatle’s portrayal of this hybridity highlights the tensions and racial situations that come with living between cultures.

The transcultural attitude of Alex Wheatle’s work here reflects the complexity of black British identity, where characters constantly negotiate and redefine their cultural affiliation. Black British characters, particularly the protagonist Dennis Huggins, express their attachment to their culture in several important ways as a result of their education. Through the language and dialect, they often speak in a blend of Jamaican patois and London slang, reflecting their dual heritage and asserting their cultural identity in a society that often marginalises them. Words like “Bricky” (A. Wheatle, 2008, p. 1). which refers to “Brixton,” “ ‘Cos” (A. Wheatle, 2008, p. 1) “because” “chi chi men” (A. Wheatle, 2008, p. 1) “ gay people” “shottas” (A. Wheatle, 2008, p. 2) “shooters or armed gangsters” “duppy” (A. Wheatle, 2008, p. 5) “ghost” “bruk” (A. Wheatle, 2008, p. 6) “broke.”

Alex Wheatle’s use of this writing style is evident in his other works, like *Island Songs* published in 2006 in which he writes “nush” (.....) to mean “ “don’t” and cyan’t (A. Wheatle, 2006, p. 13) referring to “can’t.” In addition to the language mentioned above as Black British’s cultural identity, the music also helps them assert their identity. Reggae, dub, and soul music play a crucial role in the characters' lives. These genres are not just entertainment but rather a form of cultural expression and a way to stay connected to Caribbean roots. Sound systems and music gatherings serve as community spaces and cultural affirmations. In the following quotation, for

example, Dennis shows his love for black music. He states, for instance “.....I stopped having white friends. Nothing racial about it. It’s just that we have different musical tastes. Most of them like Oasis, Coldplay and shit like that. You know, music that don’t require getting up and dancing to and instead they’ll do that air guitar fuckery. We like R&B, hip hop, dancehall reggae. (A. Wheatle, 2008, p. 4) From this passage, the narrator does not only show his love for black culture, but also demonstrates the resistance of Black British characters.

They are united by shared experiences of racism and exclusion, which strengthen their cultural solidarity. Their culture has become a source of pride and resistance, especially in the face of systemic injustice. Then, the importance of the education Dennis receives from his parents in this novel lies not only in formal schooling but also in the emotional, cultural, and identity forming lessons that help him begin to reclaim his sense of self. The narrator uses these moments to show that true education can come from understanding one’s roots, receiving love, and learning how to navigate the world with dignity and self-awareness.

## 1.2. The Influences of Ghetto Culture on Black British

The influence of ghetto culture on Black British identity in Alex Wheatle's *The Dirty South* is an important issue that we will discuss in this section. Ghetto culture is portrayed as a mix of urban’s living conditions, street identity, music (especially reggae and sound system culture), and a reaction to systemic marginalization. Dennis’s immersion in ghetto culture, for example, shapes his worldview, relationships, and choices.

Through the eyes of the protagonist Dennis Huggins, Wheatle vividly portrays a community shaped by racial oppression, economic hardship, and cultural resilience. This portrayal reflects the complexities of growing up black and British in a society that often marginalises and criminalises black youth. From the outset, Dennis's life is deeply influenced by the culture of the South London streets. After spending his early years in the oppressive environment of a children's home in Surrey, he moves to Brixton which is a vibrant but rough urban area with a strong Caribbean presence. This move is Dennis’s first real exposure to ghetto culture. The street life he encounters is governed by codes of respect, reputation, and resilience. One of the most powerful elements of this culture is music, particularly reggae. He becomes involved in building and promoting it. Music becomes a symbol of identity, resistance, and pride.



Alex Wheatle's novel presents language and street style as other key features of ghetto culture. Dennis adopts a distinctive "patois" and "street slang" that reflect both his Caribbean heritage and his new urban environment. This linguistic shift symbolises his transition from institutional alienation to cultural self-assertion. The novel shows that black British's way of speaking and dressing is not just fashion but an act of resistance or a statement of pride in one's roots. Dennis's interest in the culture of his local community is a way to reject the racial attitude he and the other black British have faced from mainstream white British society.

Through the following quotation, Dennis demonstrates, in three main stages, the way ghetto culture influences Black British. He states, for example: "I am gonna write an honest account of what's really go on in my life, the mistake I've made, chances I had and why I ended up in this grimy place." (A. Wheatle, 2008, p. 1) As we can notice, Dennis as the narrator clearly gives the opportunity to the reader to follow his life condition from the beginning to the end. Mistakes are part of human life and it is obvious that a human being makes some mistakes at a certain moment of his or her life. But "chances" that Dennis Huggins talks about in his tales refer to his good family education he has received. As far as his admission to prison is concerned, it is evocative to the difficult and racist system of integration in British society. Then, there is no doubt that racism and misrepresentation in Brixton are the principal factors that lead young black people on the roads. Dennis confirms this in the following quotation. "We fantasize about wearing heavy gold chains and fur coats and driving them rides that bounce up and down on road. That was the bomb." (Alex, 2008:4)

By reading this passage, it is clear that Dennis and his peers grapple with societal structures that offer limited avenues for advancement. Despite having both parents at home, Dennis observes that many of his friends lack stable family support, leading them to seek belongings elsewhere. This environment fosters a sense of exclusion and pushes them toward illicit activities as a means of survival and identity formation. Margaret Davis highlights this idea by stating:

Teenage boys as young as 13 are being lured with promises of money and gifts to work for drug dealers.... Young people are offered cash, mobile phones, vapes and clothes to take advantage of so-called "business opportunities" promoted on social media. British Transport Police reports, "have seen messages sent out by drug dealers asking "who wants to make£500 this weekend?" as they draw young people into the gangs." (D. Margaret, 2023).



From this idea, Margaret Davis presents ghetto culture as a survival mechanism in British society with systemic inequality, racial discrimination, and limited opportunities. Brixton becomes a breeding ground for illicit activity due to the lack of legitimate avenues for advancement. Young men, like Dennis and his best friend Noel see drug dealing as one of the few viable paths to economic empowerment and social status. The narrator supports this when he writes: “Once a week we would step to Red Eyes’ flat and buy our skunk. It was easy money, always shotting to people we knew” (A. Wheatle, 2008, p. 23). The ghetto’s value system thus elevates hustlers as figures of respect, reinforcing the idea that power and protection can only be achieved through dominance in the street economy. The novel itself portrays how the absence of legitimate opportunities makes gang involvement an enticing alternative. Dennis's transition from petty theft to more serious crimes, including drug dealing, underscores the powerful draw of gang culture. Dennis and the other young blacks’ attitudes reflect the internal conflict of balancing cultural heritage with the pressures of assimilation. Their interactions within their community and the broader society illustrate the complexities of maintaining one's identity while navigating external expectations and stereotypes.

## **2. The Issue of Integration in British Society**

The problem of Black British’s integration into Brixton is also related to the period. Alex Wheatle’s novel is set in 1980s Brixton, a time and place marked by racial tensions and all sorts of marginalisation. The protagonist, Dennis Huggins, faces numerous challenges that reflect the difficulties of integration experienced by black British youth in Brixton. This part will particularly emphasise the way the education system and mainstream media fail to represent black British experiences, reinforcing the feeling of being “outsiders” in British society.

### **2.1. The Barrier in Brixton**

White people struggle hard to create a barrier between them and the minority group in Brixton. Dennis raises the issue of integration as a crucial debate in this novel. For him, the

difficulties that the ethnic minority faces in Britain are the result of cultural diversity between blacks and whites. This cultural diversity constitutes an obstacle for black British to be part of British society. He highlights this point by writing:

It was about the same time I stopped having white Friends. Nothing racial about it. It is just that we have different musical tastes. Most of them like Oasis, Coldplay and shit like that, you know music that don't require getting up and dancing to and instead they 'll do that air guitar fuckery. We like R&B, hip hop and dancehall reggae (...) it wasn't cool to hang with them. (A.Wheatle, 2008, p. 4)

From this quotation, Dennis points out the cultural difference through his relation with his white friends. The simple fact of having "different musical tastes" (A. Wheatle, 2008 p. 4) makes black people's integration into British society almost impossible. Music as a canal by which two cultures can meet and have entertainment is an aspect that both white people and blacks consider in their relationship. We can clearly notice that they cannot broaden their relationship, since they do not have the same musical taste. As a result, it finally leads them to be separated from each other. Through the story of Dennis Huggins, the novel vividly portrays the marginalisation faced by Black people in Britain. It then examines systemic racism, social exclusion, struggles with identity, and the resilience of a community determined to thrive despite the oppression. By focusing on the personal and communal experiences of Black British, the narrator offers a poignant critique of society that pushes them to the fringes. One of the most striking elements of the novel is its depiction of systemic racism and institutional neglect. Set against the backdrop of a hostile urban environment, the narrator highlights how Black communities are systematically disadvantaged. Poor housing, high unemployment rates, and under-resourced public services plague the lives of many characters in the book. The narrator exposes the deeply embedded racism within the justice system. The authorities do not serve to protect Black communities, but rather to control and intimidate them.

This sense of marginalisation is further reinforced through the stereotyping and social exclusion experienced by Dennis and his peers. By the following quotation, Dennis denounces the difficulties of opportunities that black people meet in British society. He states:

The job I had was a kinda compromise after Paps and myself had a serious row about me not going to college to study history or something. He had this dream of me being a university professor. Burn that dream 'cos I've never heard of a black university professor. We had a beef once about how many black men are in neat jobs, like Managing Director of a namebrand

company and shit like that. Paps couldn't answer me when I said I bet there weren't more than ten black professors in the country. Even if I did have the qualifications and shit they'd make it harder for me. They always make it more difficult for black people. Black sportsmen, singers, rappers and the odd token black on reality TV shows were the only fucked up role models in my world. But even if there was some black history professor out there I couldn't see the likes of me getting that goal and nor did any at my school (A. Wheatle, 2008, p. 35).

This quotation testifies about the lack of job opportunities and how this deeply affects the lives of young people like the protagonist, Dennis Huggins. Black British's personal experiences highlight the broader socio-economic and racial injustices that limited the futures of many in Britain's urban communities. The theme of unemployment functions not only as a personal obstacle for Dennis, but also as a symbol of institutional failure and social neglect. Dennis as a young man with potential, intelligence, and ambition, yet he finds himself trapped in an environment that offers him very few legitimate paths forward. Despite Dennis father's willingness to see his son working as a university professor and his desire for a better life, the opportunities given to black British are really limited and even impossible. The narrator uses this to underscore the deep economic divide affecting working-class neighborhoods in South London. For Dennis and others like him, job interviews often end in rejection, and even basic employment is hard to come by. This reflects the systemic inequality that exists in Britain. As Black people, they are judged not by their ability or character, but by the colour of their skin. This racism not only denies young Black men jobs, but also makes them feel alienated and unwanted in Britain. This situation shows how these repeated rejections led to a build-up of anger and frustration.

There is no equality of treatment in their different public services. Dennis describes his mother's working environment when he states: "My mother is now a legal secretary and she works for some solicitor firm in Clapham Junction..... when she gets home from the office, she's always bitching about the white people at her workplace and how she has to be better than them just to get equality." (A. Wheatle, p. 2)

From this passage, Dennis illustrates how systemic racism, economic hardship, and cultural alienation create significant barriers to Black British integration. The narration above shows that Dennis' mother wants to do her best to work as well as she can but she is confronted with a racial system that favours inequality between blacks and whites. As a child, Dennis clearly

observes the racist attitude of his parents' white colleagues. In fact, they maintain a kind of distance between them and black people in order to show their superiority and otherness. This extract justifies their behaviour when the narrator states: I've never seen any of Mum's white colleagues step through our front door nor any of my paps' work bredrens." (A. Wheatle, p. 2) This quotation foregrounds the relationship between whites and blacks. It is exactly what embraces the issues of black people's integration into British society.

Alex Wheatle's novels are not only vivid portrayals of life in Britain's underprivileged Black communities; they are also searing critiques of the racist attitudes that persist in white dominated institutions. In his works, the racist outlook of white people is depicted as an entrenched, systemic force rather than isolated acts of prejudice. Dennis faces limited opportunities in education and employment, reflecting the economic struggles many Black people faced during the 1980s. Living in disadvantaged areas with little government support forces many to turn to crime or gangs as a means of survival. Wheatle portrays white characters as often unconsciously or deliberately reinforcing stereotypes about Black British. Whether through subtle body language, dismissive language, or overt discriminatory practices, these racist attitudes are depicted as both normalized and institutionalized. White characters in his narratives may be seen avoiding Black individuals in public spaces or employing condescending, paternalistic behaviour, thereby perpetuating an "us versus them" dynamic.

It is then clear that racism is extended beyond personal prejudice to manifest in the policies and practices of institutions such as the police, schools, and media. The disproportionate stop-and search tactics by the police, for example, are not accidental; they are symptomatic of a system that sees Black youth as inherently threatening. The narrator strengthens this idea when he states: "Too many black kids are getting killed and the killers are going free all because no-one in the black community will talk." (A.Wheatle, 2008, p. 168)

This systemic bias is a powerful undercurrent in the narrator's portrayal of white society, where political power serves to reinforce racial hierarchies. Sometimes, these racial attitudes force Black characters to see themselves through the distorted mirror of white prejudice. This internal conflict reflects the constant negotiation between an authentic self and a self-shaped by an external, racist gaze. The racist attitudes of white characters not only dehumanise Black individuals externally, but they also inflict internal wounds that shape identity and self-worth. The

narrator of this work often exposes how these attitudes create a double-edged sword for Black individuals: they are dehumanized externally while being forced to internalise negative stereotypes, resulting in a fractured sense of self. Ultimately, Wheatle's narratives serve both as a mirror reflecting society's enduring racial biases and as a call to dismantle the structures that uphold them.

## 2.2. White People's Conception of Blacks in Brixton

Young Black men are routinely perceived as criminals or troublemakers, regardless of their actual behaviour. Dennis, a teenager with a passion for music, finds himself constantly battling against the assumptions made about him based on his race and appearance. The media plays a significant role in perpetuating these stereotypes, contributing to a society that is quick to judge and slow to understand. As a result, many characters feel alienated from mainstream British society and denied the opportunity to fully participate or be accepted. Despite the challenges they face, the characters in *The Dirty South* demonstrate remarkable resilience. Rather than accepting their marginalised status, they create their own spaces for empowerment and connection. Community centres, clubs, and music scenes become sanctuaries where Black youth can be themselves, away from the judgment of wider society. The narrator's depiction of this resilience is both moving and inspiring, offering hope amid the harsh realities the minority group endures.

When the narrator states: "They say there are more black men behind bars and in mental institutions than there is in universities in England but I reckon it is a white man who researched this that shit." (A. Wheatle, 2008, p. 1) The idea that black people are the most dangerous members of British society is a Western concept. This statement highlights how white people often hold stereotypical and negative views of black people, assuming they are more likely to be criminal or mentally unstable. This is merely a racial bias that reduces black individuals to harmful and simplistic labels. The belief that there are more black people in prison or institutions may reflect how racism results in higher incarceration or institutionalization rates, but it also shows how white people perceive black communities through a lens of fear or suspicion, rather than understanding or fairness. This assumption is part of the narrative used by characters to discuss how society misunderstands and mistreats them while exposing the everyday racism and stereotyping faced by Black British youth.

That is the reason why the narrator himself, as a black man, rejects the idea by saying that “I reckon it is a white man who researched this that shit.” (A.Wheatle, 2008, p. 1) Dennis’ reaction here may reveal their frustration with being judged or treated unfairly, or it may show how they experience the consequences of living in a racially unjust society. He also wants to draw attention to how racist assumptions shape social attitudes and systems. The reader is then invited to think critically about the real-life implications of those views. Even Police harassment, which is frequent in British society, demonstrates the negative view of whites toward black communities. Black teenagers are treated with suspicion even when they are doing ordinary things.

## **Conclusion**

This novel of Alex Wheatle through a transcultural perception raises the issue of integration. Transculturation as the process in which subjugated groups creatively adopt and transforms cultural forms from different groups creates real difficulties for the integration of Black people in British society. Since it often leads to cultural tensions, identity struggles, and a sense of displacement, this cultural transformation clearly contributes to the protagonist's difficulties by complicating his identity. The main character, Dennis, grapples with his identity as both a Jamaican and a British citizen. This transcultural experience is often marked by a conflict between his heritage and the pressures of British society. Then, it can lead to confusion, alienation and frustration as he tries to navigate these competing cultural expectations. He also faces racism and discrimination in a society that imposes Western norms while marginalizing black people’s cultural identity.

This ongoing tension makes it difficult for the protagonist and the other black characters to find a sense of belonging in British society. Language is another aspect of transculturation that impacts Black British’s integration. The characters often communicate using Caribbean English, which may be misunderstood or ridiculed by broader British society. This linguistic gap can isolate them further, as they are caught between speaking the language of their heritage and having to conform to the “proper” English expected in Britain. This reflects the broader challenge

of transculturation, where different cultural norms around communication can create division and alienation.

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