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Racialised Boundaries in Tourism and Travel: A Case Study of the UK Black Caribbean Community

MARCUS L. STEPHENSON[*] and HOWARD L. HUGHES[†]

International Institute for Culture, Tourism and Development, Department of Business and Service Sector Management, London Metropolitan University, London;

†Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester, UK

ABSTRACT   *Studies of tourism motivation and behaviour have not accounted significantly for the aspirations and experiences of ethnic minority groups living in metropolitan societies. This conceptual paper presents a case study of the UK black Caribbean community and seeks to indicate ways in which members of this community perceive places, spaces and destinations in Europe. Attention is directed to how black people's perceptions and experiences are influenced and structured by the social conditions of racialism and racism. The discussion considers how the incursive nature of the white gaze, and popular representations and stereotypes of black societies and cultures, contribute to black people's disengagement from 'tourism experiences'. Racialised experiences and encounters call into question an individual's right to adopt a tourist identity. As the discussion partly focuses on ways in which black visitors perceive 'white others', the work strongly implies that there is a fundamental need to remove the 'white gaze' as the only or dominant way to observe and make sense of the world. Given that this paper contributes to an understanding of how race relations are reproduced within tourism environments, it concludes with suggestions as to how future studies of ethnic minority tourism and travel might be conducted.*

Introduction

The sociological and anthropological study of tourism behaviour has significantly developed as a consequence of a range of contributions from writers such as Cohen (1979), Graburn (1983, 1989), MacCannell (1976) and Urry (2002). These analysts focused on the symbolic importance of tourism in people's lives, accounting for the intrinsic and extrinsic factors influencing patterns of behaviour. However, the socio-cultural and economic reasons as to why individuals may be either unable or

Correspondence address: Dr Marcus L. Stephenson, Director of Postgraduate Research, International Institute for Culture, Tourism and Development, Department of Business and Service Sector Management, London Metropolitan University, North Campus, Stapleton House, 277–281 Holloway Road, London, N7 8HN. Tel.: +020 7133 3029; Fax: +020 7133 3076; Email: m.stephenson@londonmet.ac.uk

unwilling to travel to particular destinations have not been fully explored in mainstream tourism studies. Any serious attempt to deal with such concerns would contribute to a wider understanding of tourism access and participation. Some separate enquiries have started to address the structural factors influencing patterns of participation, especially with respect to aspects of social class (Seaton, 1992; Smith and Hughes, 1999; Shaw and Williams, 2002), gender (Deem, 1996; Wearing and Wearing, 1996, Housee, 1999) and sexuality (Clift and Forrest, 1999; Pritchard *et al.,* 2000; Clift *et al.,* 2002). Yet, with the exception of several tentative enquiries (Philipp, 1994; Stephenson and Hughes, 1995; Klemm, 2002), the study of tourism participation and race remains relatively underdeveloped.

Therefore, this current enquiry concentrates on aspects of race and investigates ways in which ethnic minorities are restricted from participating in tourism experiences. With specific reference to the black Caribbean community in the UK, the paper discusses how elements of racialism and institutionalised racism influence people's perceptions (aspirations and experiences) of travel and tourism. This discussion is initially contextualised within an historical perspective, focusing on the racially determined nature of travel events and touristic processes.

The conceptual analysis of tourism behaviour has traditionally been explored from a symbolic perspective, commonly applied within the sociological and anthropological study of tourism from the late 1970s. This approach predominantly deals with the productive dimensions of the tourism experience, highlighting how tourism participation helps to reconstruct human identities through a variety of interactive relationships and social experiences (Graburn, 1983, 1989; Jafari, 1987; Selwyn, 1990). Such a line of enquiry likens tourism to a ritualistic process involving the stimulation of individual/collective emotions and the generation of intense spiritual experiences. Adherents of the symbolic perspective have identified a range of behaviour patterns that characterise the tourist experience: collective practices, transformative lifestyles and liberated experiences, and forms of 'anti-structural' behaviour considered to be distinct from the norms and structures of everyday life (Gottlieb, 1982; Graburn, 1983, 1989; Jafari, 1987). In general terms, the symbolic perspective suggests that collective encounters and interactions potentially encourage individuals from different social backgrounds to share a deep sense of 'universal sisterhood' and/ or 'brotherhood'.

Individuals need to engage in tourism in order to transcend feelings of alienation produced as a consequence of living in 'socially dislocated' societies (MacCannell, 1976). Tourism participation encourages individuals to escape from the mundane realities of home life, providing them with opportunities to reconstruct their identities as a consequence of experiencing new situations, alternative life-styles and liberated encounters (Cohen and Taylor, 1992). The process of reconstruction involves the adoption of a new role associated with the status of 'touristhood' (Jafari, 1987). Importantly, tourism participation is believed to be purposeful in that it can enhance one's ego (Dann, 1977), elevate one's social status (Crompton, 1979) and promote self-actualisation (Pearce and Caltabiano, 1983). Symbolic-based enquiries thus account for the perceived functional properties of tourism involvement, either in terms of tourism's potential to unite individuals or its capacity to produce a 'rejuvenated-self'.

However, identification of the dysfunctional aspects of the tourism experience (e.g. racialised encounters) might demonstrate that tourism participation does not fully encourage well-being, self-confidence or a heightened social status. In raising concerns over the social implications of racialised encounters and circumstances, the forthcoming discussion accounts for how specific experiences can be counter-productive to the construction of new (tourist) identities. Racialised situations and events arguably reinforce or verify people's existing (ethnic) identities rather than encourage new (tourist) identities to develop. This view relates to an understanding of how racialised (tourism) experiences reflect the structural divisions that exist within home societies and communities.

The main discussion is concerned with identifying ways in which individuals perceive, mediate and encounter destinations populated by 'white others', as well as indicating how members of host societies might respond to the presence of 'black others'. It is asserted that perceptions of other places and destinations are significantly influenced by the power of the 'white gaze', particularly in situations where black individuals enter white communities in a more physically conspicuous manner than other visitors. The work draws upon illustrations from UK rural and other European destinations.

Recent paradigms have examined tourism participation within a wider societal context. The post-modern perspective, for instance, maintains that the socio-cultural boundaries that pre-exist between different ethnic communities are in the process of disintegrating as individuals are increasingly interested in the life-styles and private spaces of others (Urry, 1990, 1995, 2002; Rojek, 1993a,b). The factors responsible for the transculturation of societies, cultures and locales are varied, including: the globalisation of the travel and tourism industry; the multi-culturalisation of cosmopolitan societies and the internationalisation of the media industry. However, interactions and interconnections between particular communities may not always be socially flexible and mutually interchangeable. Relationships can manifest racialised divisions, which, in turn, have the potential to inhibit people's capacity to engage in congenial exchanges with other cultures and societies.

Tourism participation has seemingly become more democratised in post-industrial societies than in the industrial era (Urry, 1990, 2002). Contemporary society has witnessed a range of socio-economic and structural changes that positively impact tourism development: significant increase in opportunities to travel (e.g. paid holidays); proliferation of destinations visited (e.g. those countries which have recently opened their borders to incoming tourists, particularly in response to economic liberalisation policies); advancement in transportation networks (e.g. air travel); growth of diverse forms of tourism activities (e.g. alternative forms of non-mass tourism) and rapid utilisation of new technologies (e.g. 'virtual travel' via computer-operated devices). Such observations lay claim to the view that tourism participation is a fundamental indicator of the general well-being of post-industrial societies. Given that tourism participation is seen as an important priority in people's life, the ability to travel or take a holiday is popularly perceived in societal terms as a 'necessity' (Hughes, 1991: p. 194) and/or a form of 'compulsion' (Urry, 2002: p. 156). For Urry, this assumption suggests that:

> …one is *entitled* to travel since it is an essential part of one's life. Cultures become so mobile that contemporary citizens (not just Americans!) are thought to possess the right to pass over and into other places and other cultures. (Urry, 2002: p. 157)

The ubiquitous nature of the tourism industry, the self-importance of tourist involvement and the social-cultural rights associated with tourism participation suggest that one's ability to travel should be viewed as a 'marker of citizenship' (Urry, 1995: p.165). Nevertheless, the process of being defined as a citizen of the developed world involves the right of individuals to perceive themselves as 'consumers' of 'other cultures and places' (Urry, 1995: p. 165). This viewpoint strongly implies that those who cannot financially afford to participate regularly in tourism activities are not actively enjoying the contemporary benefits that citizenship may entail. Two and a half decades ago, the Manila Declaration on World Tourism (1980) proclaimed the importance of societal responsibilities for achieving full tourism participation for all citizens, stating:

> The right to use leisure, and in particular the right of access to holidays and to freedom of travel and tourism, a natural consequence of the right to work, is recognised as an aspect of the fulfilment of the human being by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as well as by the legislation of many States. It entails for society the duty of providing for its citizens the best practical, effective and non-discriminatory access to this type of activity. (Edgell, 1990: p. 164)

The freedom to travel and participate in tourism activities may signify an individual's right to consume tourism experiences. However, there is a need to understand participation in terms of the socio-political rights of individuals to travel to various places unrestricted by the actions and/or reactions of others. From this perspective, citizenship relates to concerns that go beyond the rights of individuals to consume tourism products, or even the rights of individuals to participate in activities and events in accordance with their own cultural value systems, to a consideration of the (political) rights of individuals to be able travel and enjoy the benefits of tourism without prejudice or discrimination.

Racialism and Racism

For the purpose of this article, 'black Caribbean' commonly refers to those individuals who are of African origin but also of recent Caribbean descent, sometimes referred to as 'Afro-Caribbean' (Phoenix, 1988). The UK black Caribbean community is intergenerational, consisting mainly of first-, second- and third-generation populations. In this paper, the term 'black' is often applied synonymously with the term 'Caribbean', as opposed to other groups that have been conventionally labelled 'black' (e.g. Asians). In addition to physical appearance or skin colour, 'black' represents a state of political consciousness and a 'positive source of identity' (Pilkington, 2003: p. 37). Moreover, it is arguably a more appropriate descriptor than 'black British',[1] simply because individuals are not fully able to acquire a sense of being British given the distinctive socio-cultural and ethnic characteristics of the UK Caribbean community (Stephenson, 2002).

This community is culturally diverse, consisting of migrants and their descendants who originate from various Caribbean islands of the former British colonies (e.g. Grenada, Barbados and Jamaica). The 'Caribbean'/'black' minority is the second largest of all groups of non-European origin in the UK, totalling over 600

000 in number (Ballard and Kalra, 1994) and living predominantly in urban areas (Skellington, 1992). Caribbean migrants sought residency in the UK after the Second World War period and were employed mainly in the manufacturing and service sector industries, especially tourism, catering and transport (Fryer, 1984). The movement of Caribbean migrants to Britain, the 'Mother Country', was largely seen as an opportunity to increase people's standard of living (Manley, 1960). However, the reality of living in a racially divided society adversely affected the socio-economic welfare of Caribbean minorities.

'Racism' has traditionally been defined in fairly rigid terms, as the process by which individuals and groups popularly categorise and stereotype those whom they feel are inferior. Racial categories are often formed on the basis of intrinsic properties such as colour and national origin (Yeboah, 1988). However, definitions should progress beyond common notions of racism, towards a view of racism as a social construct. Racism thus relates to the construction and transmission of cultural and religious stereotypes, which effectively produce the 'stigmata of otherness' (Balibar, 1991: p. 18), that is, a social disposition with implications beyond biological determinism. This process may more appropriately be conceived of as 'racialism', especially as this term is associated with people's intolerance and fear of others (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1993). Racialism is frequently characterised by irrational conduct such as racial violence, prevalent in the UK from the early 1950s and responsible for creating social discomfort within black communities. The inner-city 'race riots', occurring in major urban areas during the early 1980s, revealed how sections of the black community responded to a history of racial hostility and inequality.

Critical discourses have overwhelmingly focused on why black Caribbeans frequently experience difficulties in attaining equal opportunities and benefits of British citizenship (Fryer, 1984; Gilroy, 1987; Pilkington, 2003). The denial of equal opportunities and benefits of citizenship has the effect of marginalising significant sections of the community from society at large, whether as a consequence of intentional or unintentional racial practices. Accounts concerning race relations have profiled the inhumanities faced by black communities: economic exploitation (Rex and Tomlinson, 1979); racial surveillance (Fryer, 1984); institutional racism (Small, 1994); racial violence (Keith, 1995); and racial profiling (Lyon, 2003). Evidence suggests that racial inequality is prevalent within institutional settings such as housing (Peach and Byron, 1993) and education (Pilkington, 2003). Unfortunately, concerns relating to the prevalence of racial inequalities within tourist spaces and tourism institutions have been somewhat overlooked within sociological debates on race and ethnicity.

Some analysts have observed that a new form of racism has emerged in the UK from the late 1970s, influenced by the proliferation of right-wing ideologies and the doctrines of the Conservative Party (Barker, 1981; Gilroy, 1987; Gabriel, 1994). 'New racism', believed to be politically motivated by nationalistic-based philosophies and practices, emphasises not only biological supremacy but cultural difference. Barker (1981) maintains that nationalist discourses often construct definitions of the 'British Nation' on the basis of socio-biological beliefs, appropriated by the dominant ethnic group in an attempt to preserve its status and position in society. New racism functions on the assumption that it is not natural for people from minority ethnic and cultural backgrounds to be part of a 'bounded

community' or a 'nation' (1981: p. 21). This form of racism can take effect through the territorial claims of the dominant group to restrict the political and social rights of those classified as 'outsiders'.

However, it would be too simplistic to understand racism within the boundaries of a nation or a national culture. Racism manifests itself within the institutional practices and frameworks of those countries that share similar ideologies and orientations towards minority groups. Therefore, it is crucial to consider the wider contexts of racism, notably 'pan-European racism'[2] (Jenkins, 1987; Sivanandan, 1990). As Jenkins asserts:

> European racism is a unique manifestation of ethnicity, historically formed by slavery, colonial expansion, 19th century evolution and 20th century labour migration. (Jenkins, 1987: p. 3)

The rights and interests of ethnic minority citizens, living within the geographical boundaries of the European Union (EU), have become increasingly problematic. The socio-political and economic advancement towards a more integrated Union arguably reinforces the values and objectives of dominant ethnic groups, illustrated by the fact that various centralised policies (e.g. the Social Charter) lack clear objectives for the advancement of racial equality (Kennett, 1994; Mitchell and Russell, 1994; Dunkerley *et al.,* 2002). Pan-European racism also manifests itself in EU practices and strategies to 'culturally integrate' the main populations and cultural nationalities of member states (Shore, 1993). The proliferation of shared cultural initiatives and events (e.g. sport, travel, heritage and cinema) effectively celebrate a 'European identity', which is illustrative of an institutional intention towards the 'Europeanisation of cultures and societies' (Shore and Black, 1992; Shore, 1993; Shore, 2000). Shore (2000) believes that EU elites and representatives support this aspiration because of their ideological desire to elevate Europe's global social status and cultural power.

The notion of a 'socially integrated Europe' is significantly challenged, not only because of 'intra-European differences' existing between various nationalities and ethnicities (Balibar, 2002: p. 44), but as a result of the general increase of racial hostilities towards minority groups living in countries such as Belgium, France, Germany and the UK (Keith, 1995; Witte, 1995; Banton, 1999). These concerns arguably influence how ethnic minorities perceive and encounter spaces and places in Europe.

The History of Travel: A Racialised Process

Enquiries concerning tourism access and participation issues should critically consider past events and current socio-political circumstances. As Kaplan explains:

> As travel, changing locations, and leaving home become central experiences for more and more people in modernity, the difference between the ways we travel, the reasons for our movements, and the terms of our participation in this dynamic must be historically and politically accounted for. (Kaplan, 1996: p. 102)

The coercive operations of the transatlantic slave system from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century illustrated how the 'black Caribbean' experience of travel has indeed been an exploitative one. Moreover, the mass migration of Caribbean communities to industrial societies from the mid-twentieth century illustrated that travel was increasingly perceived as a form of economic necessity (Clifford, 1992,

1997; Curtis and Pajaczkowska, 1994). The travel histories of these displaced communities reflect the socio-economic consequences of 'enslavement', 'enforced migration', 'immigration' and 'relocation' (hooks, 1992: p. 173). Therefore, tourism's 'pleasure principle' (Curtis and Pajaczkowska, 1994: p. 214), which is composed of a range of non-threatening elements such as pure diversion (Boorstin, 1977), hedonism (Turner and Ash, 1975), adventure (Munt, 1994), recreation (Graburn, 1989) and the ludic (Lett, 1983), does not necessarily help to explain the travel experiences of the Caribbean diaspora. As Curtis and Pajaczkowska note:

> The predicament of the migrant worker and refugee is largely an inversion of the experience of the tourist-their journeys are not circular, they are neither an escape from work nor a pursuit of the intensification of sensory experience. (Curtis and Pajaczkowska, 1994: p. 214)

Leed (1991: p. 273) maintained that European colonial expeditions, encouraged by the 'world-organising principle' of racism and European dominance in the global economy, accentuated the racialised boundaries between 'black' and 'white' societies. In his observations concerning the common elements of heritage tourism in Europe, Horne (1984) emphasises that Europe's national monuments and museums are testimony to its colonial exploits and imperious past. The privileged classes significantly benefited from the consumption of travel experiences. During the period of the Grand Tour, for instance, the aristocratic gentry often travelled for purposes of educational enhancement, cultural acquisition and scientific exploration (Turner and Ash, 1975). Also, during the industrial revolution colonial bureaucrats, missionaries and anthropologists ventured overseas for political, religious and cultural gains (Ellen, 1984). Appropriately, Minh-ha claims:

> For cultures whose expansion and dominance were intimately dependent upon the colonial enterprise, travelling as part of a system of foreign investment by metropolitan powers has largely been a form of culture-collecting aimed at world hegemony. (Minh-ha, 1994: p. 22)

Travel thus entailed a racial agenda as sections of the European white race often appropriated the benefits of travel for collective and self-interests. Stauder (1980) notes how anthropological interest in the study of race and slavery was motivated by the concerns of British governments and private groups to advance their political and economic control of Africa and the Caribbean. Clifford (1992: pp. 106,107) observes how 'bourgeois travellers' during the Victorian period enjoyed the status of 'proper travellers', unlike their servants and guides ('non-white persons') whose achievements were often unrecorded. Some of these explorations were often perceived as 'heroic events' for the white European race, clearly depicting a political distinction between those who travelled under duress and those who travelled as a result of material and imperial advantage. Also, Pratt (1992), via an in-depth historical analysis of travel writing, concludes that particular travel narratives and discourses often served the cultural and political interests of the European race.

The English Countryside

Racial Boundaries and Representations

Non-white minorities, visiting or considering visiting rural environments, often anticipate or encounter racial prejudice (Malik, 1992; Stephenson and Hughes,

1995, 2004; Agyeman and Spooner, 1997). Malik (1992), who compared Asian and non-Asian attitudes to the British countryside, found that the former group overwhelmingly expected racial abuse in rural domains. Although it is difficult to seriously quantify the extent to which ethnic minority groups travel to the country-side, particularly as government bodies and rural organisations have not signifi-cantly monitored the ethnic background of user groups, the countryside is often perceived as a 'no-go area' for black (and Asian) minorities. By comparing the number of racially recorded incidents to the size of the ethnic minority population, it is estimated that racial violence is ten times more likely to occur in rural areas than in urban areas (Rayner, 2001). The novelist, Andrea Levy, discusses her visits to non-urban environments:

> As soon as I step outside a major city, I feel self-conscious and it's unpleasant. It has made me feel vulnerable. I've had unpleasant experiences in pubs, comments made. When people look at me they look at me as different. That comes into my head like a Pavlovian reaction. You just want to blend in and fear that you won't. (Prasad, 2004)

Ingrid Pollard, a photographer with an interest in rural landscapes, explains her experience in the Lake District (Cumbria, north-west England):

> …it's as if the black experience is only lived in an urban environment. I thought I liked the LAKE DISTRICT, where I wandered lonely as a Black face in a sea of white. But a visit to the countryside is always accompanied by a feeling of unease, dread…feeling that I don't belong. (quoted in Taylor, 1993: p. 265)

Two study-based reports assess the implications of rural racialism. The first published report, entitled: *Keep Them in Birmingham*, profiles the racial problems ethnic minorities experience whilst living in rural areas in south-west England. In drawing attention to the plight of ethnic minorities, the report addresses the racial attitudes of members of the white community (Jay, 1992). The second report, enti-tled: *Not in Norfolk – Tackling the Invisibility of Racism*, highlights the racial diffi-culties ethnic minorities experience in rural Norfolk (east England). The work implies that negative reactions within rural environments can be detrimental to racial harmony (Derbyshire, 1994). Both reports expose the failure of public organ-isations to acknowledge the problems of rural racism. The reports also indicate that racial responses are often formulated on the belief that minorities are viewed as a threat to rural traditions and lifestyles. Unsurprisingly, UK rural areas have been seriously targeted by the British National Party (BNP) in an attempt to raise its share of the public vote. This intention reinforces BNP's wider socio-political ambitions for the maintenance and expansion of 'multicultural-free zones' (Cornish Guardian, 2004; Western Daily Press, 2004).

There are other reasons beside racial motivation and intent that account for black people's exclusion from rural areas. In order for individuals to appreciate countryside life and experience hospitable environments, they may have to acquire deep-seated knowledge of local social systems and cultural processes. Several rural-based studies have identified factors which distinguish village life from the world outside (Frankenberg, 1966; Cohen, 1982; Strathern, 1982); locat-ing insider knowledge of rural folklore and local tradition, kinship ties and friend-ship connections as appropriate motives for encouraging individuals to adapt to the socio-cultural norms of rural societies. These systems of acculturation, which

are external to the lives of those who represent a different ethnicity, cultural background and geographical location, enable individuals to feel a sense of community; imagined or otherwise. As Scruton observes:

> People value the countryside precisely for the 'we'-feeling, the sense of a common destiny, common inheritance and a continuity that is greater than a lifetime. (Scruton, 1998: p. 322)

Although it may be too naïve to assert that socio-cultural distinctions between rural and urban life are always significantly distinctive, particularly as the physical boundaries between the two entities are becoming less spatially demarcated as suburban and rural space has increasingly been appropriated by migrating (middle-class) urban populations (Pahl, 1965), black minorities still predominantly reside in spatially distinct areas of the inner city. Consequently, people's limited contact and familiarity with the rural way of life could help to explain why there are limited opportunities to participate in countryside travel. The constitution of village life arguably reinforces the (racialised) cultural differences that exist between white middle-class populations and ethnic minority populations, especially as the middle-classes often seek to uphold and reconstruct the socio-cultural conventions of village life (Lowe *et al.,* 1995; Tyler, 2003).

Yet media representations and popular perceptions of 'rurality' indirectly help to safeguard the racialised boundaries of countryside communities, especially as they create an impression of the countryside as a domain exclusive to the interests of (white) English populations. Several social analysts concur that the 'countryside milieu' is often constructed through authentic notions of 'Englishness', thereby signifying national values and customs (Lowenthal, 1991; Bunce, 1994; Matless, 1998). Mythical and symbolic images of the countryside, popularly transmitted through various media forms (e.g. countryside magazines, brochures, television programmes, poetry and novels), powerfully promote the 'quintessential national virtues' of English culture (Lowenthal, 1991: p. 213). Bunce (1994: pp. 29–34) interestingly discusses how representations of the English countryside embody romantic myths such as 'rural nostalgia', 'traditionalism', 'agrarian simplicity' and 'green and pleasant lands' – as portrayed in the works of William Blake, John Keats and William Wordsworth.

Place marketers have cultivated the image of the countryside as a bucolic idyll, rich in heritage and tradition. Romantic depictions of UK rural destinations have been formalised through the strategic process of 'branding', where marketers have devised and promoted nostalgic connections between particular places and famous English personalities. This is illustrated through the tourism logos of 'Shakespeare Country' (South Warwickshire – Warwick, Kenilworth, Royal Leamington Spa and Stratford-upon-Avon: central England), 'Wordsworth's Country' (Lake District, Cumbria: north-west England), 'Bronte Country' (Pennine Hills, West Yorkshire: north England) and 'Hardy's Wessex' (Dorset: south-west England).

Nevertheless, perceptions and encounters of racial hostility have a direct role to play in making the countryside less accessible to black visitors, especially as they perceptually establish socio-physical boundaries between visitors and local residents. Visitors are essentially more conspicuous than others and thus are potentially subjected to covert and/or overt ridicule. In this context, colour is a primary indicator influencing how visitors are socially received in rural communities. Yet

conceiving race simply in terms of biological differences does not necessarily explain how and why various disparities and differences between groups evolve and develop (Miles and Phizacklea, 1984). Boundaries and divisions between black visitors and white locals are not entirely naturally determined but formed partly as a consequence of local and national ideologies, media representations of rurality and popular perceptions of the countryside. Racialised boundaries may also be influenced by the way in which black cultures, communities and societies are commonly perceived and socially constructed.

White Perceptions of Black Communities: 'Pollution' and 'Danger'

The mass production of spurious images of black communities negatively impact on the way in which 'black others' are viewed in public places and spaces. The social construction of popular myths of black criminality (i.e. black people as 'muggers' and 'drug pushers'), exemplifies the extent to which individuals have been stereotypically portrayed and socially perceived (Hall, *et al.*, 1978; Keith, 1989; Pickering, 2001). Informatively, hooks notes:

> Stereotypes abound when there is distance. They are an invention, a pretence that one knows when the steps that would make real knowing possible cannot be taken or are not allowed. (hooks, 1992: p. 170)

It may be the case that 'black others' are viewed as a source of 'social and cultural pollution' in rural areas, threatening daily life and endangering local cultural systems and institutions. Although the constructs of 'pollution' and 'danger' are widely addressed in anthropological enquiries concerned with investigating the cultural manifestations of the human body (Douglas, 1984), their application to the study of inter-ethnic relations in host environments could help explain the reasons why racialised encounters and exchanges develop. These constructs could indicate why symbolic frames of expression and communication (e.g. physical provocation, verbal insults and intense staring) are potentially directed to those considered to be ethnically and racially different from the expected norm. The restriction and control of black people's access to white spaces may then signify how 'blackness' is perceived to pollute 'whiteness', and how there are subsequent attempts by the dominant group to 'purify' the primary space. The following narrative, provided by the poet and writer Benjamin Zephaniah, alarmingly illustrates the degree to which black individuals are instantaneously perceived as a threat or danger to the rural community. Zephaniah states:

> I was in Essex on a friend's farm and went for a long jog. Never left his land. When I got back to his house, the place was surrounded by police, a helicopter circling above. 'We have had reports of a suspicious jogger', the police said. My friend was outraged. (Prasad, 2004)

As black Caribbeans usually belong to urban domains, the perception of 'blackness' as a source of pollution ought to be contextualised within an analytical framework that accounts for the socio-spatial representations of black communities. Conceptions of the urban domain are often guided by popular images of social decay and environmental contamination (Herbert and Smith, 1989). The dysfunctional images of the inner city as a place of 'chaos' and 'squalor' (Gilroy, 1990: p. 31) symbolise a contrast to the functional myths, images and representations of the

countryside, 'where the white landscape of rurality is aligned with 'nativeness' and the absence of evil or danger' (Agyeman and Spooner 1997: p. 199). The fact that particular inner-city areas (e.g., Chapeltown, Leeds, north England; and Moss Side, Manchester, north-west England) have not been significant sites for 'visual consumption', illustrates a perception of such areas as 'socially polluting' (Urry, 1992: p. 19).

The supposed inherent 'whiteness' of rural spaces is often the subtext for concerns over the housing and accommodation of asylum seekers, where it is assumed that such people (immigrants/non-whites) are not 'suited' for rural life and thus should be located 'elsewhere', i.e., in the inner city. This concern is illustrated by the fierce opposition of resident and community groups towards government proposals to construct asylum centres and hostels in rural areas such as Bicester (Oxfordshire, south-central England), Over Stowey (Somerset, south-west England) and Throckmorton (Worcestershire, west-central England) (Gibbs, 2000; Dodd, 2002, Hall, 2003). As Lowe *et al.* claim:

> The countryside is seen as the repository of a way of life that must be protected: the 'urban' must be kept at bay. (Lowe *et al.,* 1995: p. 66)

Consequently, the view that people from all social backgrounds are becoming increasingly exposed to the lifestyles of others (Urry, 1988, 1990, 2002), and the related concern that different cultures and societies are becoming more interdependent (Rojek, 1993a), does not explain the social distances which prevail between those who live in rural communities and those minorities who live in urban communities. Yet given the problems concerning socio-physical access to white spaces, ethnic minority travel has now become a politicised concern. Organisations such as the Commission for Racial Equality and the Black Environmental Network (BEN) are addressing rights of minorities to have equal access to public places and spaces in the UK. BEN, for instance, works with various governmental organisations and rural movements to encourage ethnic minorities to be involved in environmental issues and rural recreational activities (Agyeman and Spooner, 1997). Also, the Islamic Society in Britain is playing a significant role in encouraging Muslims to 'make their presence felt in the countryside'. It has recently organised a summer camp at a Lincolnshire showground for over 3000 Muslims. The event is believed to be one of the largest gatherings of ethnic minority communities in the UK countryside (Akbar, 2003).

European Destinations

The Power of the 'White Gaze'

The prevalence of racial tensions, xenophobia and ethnic nationalisms, and the re-emergence of patriotic movements and neo-Nazi groups throughout various European countries, exemplifies the level of social opposition to 'dominant outsiders' in Europe (Kennett, 1994; Witte, 1995; Banton, 1999). In Germany, for instance, racial violence against foreigners ('ausländers') has intensified as a consequence of reunification. Minority Jewish, Vietnamese, Mozambique and Turkish communities have all been targets of racial attacks (Willems, 1995; Witte, 1995, Banton,

1999). Sections of the UK black community have been concerned with the racial violence towards black travellers in Europe. Reports in the black press often cover racialised incidents occurring in various tourism destinations. Headlines have read: 'Spanish Bouncers Leave Holiday Pals Injured' (Voice, 1996a: p. 11) and 'African in German Skinhead Attack' (Weekly Journal, 1994a: p. 7). Racialism can have a personal impact on how individuals encounter particular European destinations. One concerned individual described her encounters in Italy:

> Having recently returned from Europe I can only say that I will never be returning there again as the whole experience has given me serious misgivings…My family and I went to Milan, which is supposed to be a cosmopolitan city. Judging from the reaction we got from the locals anyone would think we had just touched down from Mars. Everywhere we went we received stares and comments…I must point out that I did not go there totally naïve and did expect some hostility, but never on such a scale. Unfortunately the future looks nothing but bleak for black people both travelling and living in Europe. (Weekly Journal, 1994b: p. 17)

Inhospitable experiences obviously discourage individuals from returning to places perceived to engender acts of racialism. Michael Lomotey (2001: p. 4), an outreach worker for Tourism Concern, describes his holiday experiences in France:

> I am snubbed by taxi drivers and shop keepers who pretend not to see me or not to understand me. In rural France people visibly freak out when they see my black face. I remember one woman crossing the street clutching her bags when she saw me. I don't go to France any more – it has little appeal. (Lomotey, 2001: p. 4)

Writer and journalist, Gary Younge, highlights several racialised encounters that he had experienced:

> I was beaten up by the police in a Paris metro in 1991; a year earlier I had stood with my brother in a hotel reception in Barcelona and watched two white tourists get the room we had just been told was not available; a few years later I was threatened with being thrown over-board by a Flemish ferry worker for putting my feet on the chairs during overnight crossing. (Younge, 1998: p. 2)

A post-modern reading views tourism experiences as having a significant role in dissolving the socio-cultural boundaries that pre-exist between local and foreign cultures. According to Urry:

> International tourism produces international familiarization/normalization so that those from other countries are no longer seen as particularly dangerous and threatening – just different – and this seems to have happened on a large scale in Europe in recent years. (Urry, 1995: pp. 166–167)

However, in instances where racial boundaries between visitors and guests are socially and ideologically constructed, opportunities for the development of normative exchanges and productive encounters are seriously limited. Racial differences decelerate the formation of mutual affiliations and congenial social relations between hosts and guests. In his essay, *Stranger in the Village*, James Baldwin discusses how his presence in a village in Switzerland signified an historical relationship between the colonisers and the colonised, noting:

> I thought of white men arriving for the first time in an African village, strangers there, as I am a stranger here, and tried to imagine the astounded populace touching their hair and marvelling at the colour of their skin. But there is a great difference between the first white man to be seen by Africans and being the first black man to be seen by whites. The white man takes the astonishment as tribute, for he arrives to conquer and to convert the natives, whose inferiority in relation to himself is not even to be questioned; whereas I, without a thought of conquest, find

myself among a people whose culture controls me, has even, in a sense, created me, people who have cost me more in anguish and rage than they will ever know, who yet do not even know of my existence. The astonishment with which I might have greeted them, should they have stumbled into my African village a few hundred years ago, might have rejoiced their hearts. But the astonishment with which they greet me today can only poison mine. (Baldwin, 1995: p. 155)

Cheong and Miller (2000: p. 383) acknowledge that tourists can become 'primary objects' of the 'local gaze', particularly as their physical, cultural and economic presence can instigate local surveillance and suspicion. Locals can thus be antagonistic towards tourists by acting 'as agents in power relations by galvanizing (active or passive) resistance to tourists' (Cheong and Miller, 2000: p. 382). This perspective could have some value in understanding ways in which black individuals are treated in host environments, especially as these visitors are more subjected to power-bound relationships than their white (tourist) counterparts. If white tourists do encounter displays of aggression in non-white (host) communities, then this may be partly understood as a reaction to their economic superiority, social capital and racial status. The racially imperious nature of tourist quests and encounters is a dominant concern in several provocative critiques of western tourism (Turner and Ash, 1975; Kincaid, 1988; Nash, 1989). Consequently, claims which purport that tourists can be perceived as 'targets of power' (Cheong and Miller, 2000: pp. 380–382) should be re-evaluated once issues of racial power and inequality have been seriously addressed. Importantly, studies concerning power-bound relationships in tourism need to undertake detailed assessments of the racialised encounters and inequalities that transpire between (and within) different cultures, societies and ethnic groups.[3]

People's aspirations and perceptions do not conform fully to post-modern theorisations of the tourist's sensibilities, particularly the need to explore isolated destinations. This aspiration apparently belongs to the 'post-tourist' (i.e. someone prepared to take chances and experience challenging situations) (Feifer, 1985: p. 259; Urry, 1990, 2002). Increasing opportunity to indulge in chance encounters and experimental experiences is read as a function of living in (post-industrial) 'risk societies' where individualised endeavours, fraught situations and personalised uncertainties are ever significant (Beck, 1992). For members of the black community, however, the desire or need to take risks may be of a lower priority than the need for secure and safe experiences. Social and personal risks may be heightened in regions of Europe that do not have a significant black Caribbean presence. The novelist, Mike Phillips (2001: p. 197), explains how visits to Eastern Europe embody 'peculiar and dislocating experience(s)'. During his first visit to Prague, for instance, he comments:

What I was thinking about was the fact that I hadn't seen another black person since I'd left Heathrow. In these circumstances you get a sense of isolation. You wonder a little about what would happen if you were attacked by a mob of racists, or even by a solitary nutter…What was certain was the fact that, unlike Western Europe, the countries of Eastern Europe had practically no contact with Africa or Asia. (Phillips, 2001: pp. 195–196)

Individuals may therefore aspire to travel to destinations that limit their exposure to socially dislocated experiences and the consequent threat of racialised encounters. Philipp's 1994 study, comparing black and white tourism participation

patterns in America, found that those who have previously experienced racial conflict are more likely to travel in large groups to familiar territories. Unless travel events are well organised and very secure, racialised realities can overshadow the experience of visiting other cultures and communities. However, travel could be less threatening in places where there is a significant presence of 'black others'. The ancestral homelands of the Caribbean are likely destinations for UK black Caribbean visitors to feel a sense of safety and comfort, especially as racialised encounters are expected to be nominal. Travelling to the homeland also enables individuals to undergo a process of ethnic and cultural familarisation,[4] encouraging them to maintain social ties with family members and discover/rediscover their ethnic histories (Stephenson, 2002).

However, within the geographic contours of Europe, areas that are cosmopolitan in nature and form possess a comforting appeal to the black Caribbean visitor.[5] Destinations such as Amsterdam and Paris may be perceived to be more tolerant of ethnic and racial differences than areas less populated by Caribbean populations. In his book, *The European Tribe*, Caryl Phillips recounts his personal experience of countries such as Germany, Holland, Norway and Spain. During his visit to Norway, he notes:

> In a way, I came to Norway to test my own sense of negritude. To see how many of 'their' ideas about me, if any, I subconsciously believed. Under a volley of stares it is only natural to want eventually to recoil and retreat. In a masochistic fashion, I was testing their hostility. True, it is possible to feel this anywhere, but in Paris or New York, in London or Geneva, there is always likely to be another black person around the corner or across the road. Strength through unity in numbers is an essential factor in maintaining a sense of sanity as a black person in Europe. (Phillips, 1993: p. 102)

Members of the black community are arguably in a better position to empathise and identify with other ethnic minority groups because they have shared experiences of racism and inequality. Furthermore, any feelings associated with being a 'complete outsider' or 'stranger' in Europe may be challenged through mutual associations with people who share similar ethnic origins and possess comparable cultural and political histories. Yet despite this suggestion, black visitors still potentially face threatening experiences and fearful encounters, especially in instances where the incursive nature of the white gaze supersedes productive experiences.

Problems Encountered at Europe's Borders and Frontiers: 'Rights of Passage'

European Union Member States have made concerted attempts to strengthen immigration restrictions towards asylum seekers, refugees and migrants from the 'South'. At points of entry, individuals have experienced prolonged periods of detainment or immediate repatriation 'home' (Mitchell and Russell, 1994). Some of the problems that non-nationals experience extend to those ethnic minorities who have legal status of entry and/or residency – as they too are 'visibly different' from Europe's ethnic majorities (Allen and Macey, 1990: p. 385). Sivanandan drew attention to problems that the 'free movement' of citizens between European states could have on black citizens, believing that journeys would be politically uncertain, stating:

> Citizenship may open Europe's borders to blacks and allow them free movement, but racism which cannot tell one black from another, a citizen from an immigrant, an immigrant from a refugee…is going to make such a movement fraught and fancy. (Sivanandan, 1990: pp. 159–160)

During the 1990s, the black press significantly focused on complaints from the black community of incidents of racial harassment during entry into and/or exit from countries such as Belgium, France, the Netherlands and the UK (Voice, 1996b: p. 6). One particular incident occurred when over three hundred Jamaican visitors, travelling to the UK to visit their families for Christmas celebrations, were detained for a significant amount of time by the British immigration authorities. At least thirty of the visitors were forced to return to Jamaica (Jones, 1994: p. 7; Oakes, 1994: p. 1; Francis, 1995: p. 3).

The UK Home Office move in January 2003 to introduce a legal requirement for Jamaican nationals to acquire a visa to enter the UK (Travis, 2003: p. 6) further illustrates ways in which journeys are increasingly monitored by state authorities. Jamaica is one of several black countries of the Commonwealth where its citizens are restricted from entering the UK. Yet the Guyanese are the only other Caribbean nationals who require a visa. The 'visa regime' will directly impact upon extended family networks in the UK, by restricting and monitoring visits of relatives from Jamaica (Gallimore, 2003: p. 13). Jamaicans living in the USA and Canada are also likely to face the inconvenience of obtaining a travel visa during their visits to the UK (Lindsay, 2003: p. 13). This case exemplifies the significant degree to which state legislation not only impacts the physical mobility of black (diasporic) groups, but adversely affects social networks and kinship connections.

The travel restrictions and problems faced by non-whites relate to national concerns over the illegal entry of 'immigrants'/'refugees' and the importation of illegal substances. For HM Customs and Excise, it is imperative to execute extra security measures and searches from Jamaica, Nigeria and South America, since illicit drugs originate from such places. However, the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, the Society of Black Lawyers and the Anti-Racist Alliance acknowledge that repetitive cross-examination at customs and passport control is counter-productive to racial tolerance and equality (Butscher, 1995: p. 2; Weekly Journal, 1995: p. 3).

In his ethnographic study of European holiday experiences by first- and second-generation members of Manchester's (UK) Afro-Caribbean community, Stephenson reported why Valerie, a second-generation Jamaican, believed that black people are often subject to racial harassment by custom officials:

> Black people go through on red alert much of the time, even with a British passport. It doesn't make any difference, you have got a black face and that's that…I think one of the main reasons is that they have stereotypes in their heads. They suspect them of drug dealing. It's the ganja thing! Black people have been made scapegoats. (Stephenson, 1997: p. 192)

Despite the government's position concerning tightened security measures for individuals travelling from countries that are believed to be active in 'drug smuggling', systematic searches and incidents of perceived racial harassment have also been reported by black (British) citizens returning to the UK from various

European countries (Weekly Journal, 1994c: p. 2). Stephenson also highlighted Larry's experience of a return visit from France. Larry, a second-generation Jamaican, explained:

> They stopped me there at Dover for hours. Well they are playing fuckry man, I'm telling you. I questioned them, 'Why me, why not stop the white man?' Because they all went through, no problem…they said it's to do with the tightening of security because of the IRA bombings in London. Well I said to them, 'Why is me, a black man, a Jamaican, going to want to get messed up in other people's war for?' (Stephenson, 1997: p. 194)

The racialised experience that Phillips (1993: pp. 100–102) encountered during his arrival at Oslo's Fornebu Airport illustrates the degree of institutionalised racism manifest in travel and tourism at a wider European level. He was inquisitioned by a female officer at passport control who was concerned with the amount of money he carried, the purpose of his visit and his intended length of stay in Norway. Another male official then approached him to ask a series of similar questions. Increasingly frustrated by this situation, Phillips cursed the two officials for his ill treatment. He was 'frogmarched' to the customs hall to endure the embarrassment of being thoroughly searched in the presence of other travellers. Phillips was eventually taken to the main office where the Chief Officer informed him 'to act like a gentleman', inquiring if he had 'cultural difficulties' in communicating with female officers. On leaving, Phillips then asked the Chief Officer if Desmond Tutu was to expect similar treatment during his expected visit to Norway to receive the Nobel Peace Prize.

Although 'black others' have a tendency to be popularly perceived as 'threatening' or 'dangerous', 'white others' can also be viewed in a similar light. hooks views her encounter in France as an illustration of the importance of reading racial situations from a perspective that accounts for perceptions of 'whiteness'. She states:

> …I was stripped searched by French officials, who were stopping black people to make sure we were not illegal immigrants and/or terrorists, I think that one fantasy of whiteness is that the threatening Other is always a terrorist. This projection enables many white people to imagine there is no representation of whiteness as terror, as terrorizing. (hooks, 1992: p. 174)

These observations carry greater poignancy since the 11 September 2001 attacks in America, which seriously aggravated the difficulties experienced by ethnic minority travellers. Due to 'terrorist concerns', Asian and Muslim travellers have been subjected to hostile treatment from immigration officials, aviation authorities and other passengers (Wazir, 2001b). Moreover, European (and non-European) countries have significantly increased their levels and techniques of surveillance (Lyon, 2003). In the UK, for instance, the Government is attempting to introduce biometric identifiers (e.g. fingerprinting, iris scanning and facial mapping) at airports (ComputerWeekly.com, 2003). These measures could provoke wide-ranging socio-political consequences, especially with respect to racial profiling and ethnic monitoring.

Consequently, the journeys of 'racialised others' do not always constitute legitimate touristic ventures. This is evident in situations where one's status or identity as a tourist is not fully sanctioned by state authorities. Therefore, the purpose of travel is potentially perceived as involving the pursuit of criminal or illegal

activities rather than activities of an educational or pleasurable nature. Aspects of control and containment reflect a continuation of those coercive and threatening events of the past (Clifford, 1992; hooks, 1992; Curtis and Pajaczkowska, 1994). As previously indicated, the travel histories of Caribbean diasporic groups expose the 'horrors of their exile' (James, 1993: p. 244).

The symbolic perspective, concerning the ritualistic and allegoric nature of tourism experiences, suggests that individuals usually adopt a tourist status and identity by undertaking a series of physical movements into distinct socio-spatial settings. These movements, commonly termed 'rites of passages' in anthropological literature, usually involve specific obligations, interactions and exchanges. They provide individuals with the capacity to distance themselves from the structured and restricted environments of ordinary life (Graburn, 1983, 1989; Jafari, 1987). For individuals to then become 'emancipated' into the realm of touristhood, free from the norms and structures of home life, movements have to be 'legalised' and 'legitimised' by administrative processes and procedures (Jafari, 1987: pp. 152–153).

However, 'rites of passage' do not always involve acts of consensus and consent between all individuals, as the symbolic perspective implies, but can manifest degrees of conflict and resistance. The suggestion that the journey involves the passage of individuals into a 'non-ordinary sphere of existence' (Graburn, 1989: p. 28) is not necessarily applicable to the case concerned. Negative experiences epitomise the structural dislocations and institutional problems existing within everyday (home) environments. As public spaces can be sites for expressions of contestation and restraint, travel experiences do not always symbolise acts of 'communion' (Graburn 1983: p. 11) and nor do they fully manifest 'anti-structural' performances (Jafari, 1987: p. 154). In this case, the journey is not a licence to participate in movements or activities completely devoid of physical and mental constraints. Rather, it is a journey involving significant degrees of control, protest and mediation. The right to travel, freely and willingly, into various public spaces is thus problematic. In this context, it is appropriate to understand participation issues by drawing immediate attention to aspects relating to the *'rights* of passage' rather than the *'rites* of passage'.

Although ethnic majorities seemingly have the all defining power to affirm ethnic differences, illustrated in cases where those differences are manufactured by racialised perceptions of 'black others', black Caribbeans conceivably have the right to affirm or re-assess their own identities; either as a reaction to the coercive responses of others or as a consequence of the need to maintain a sense of personal or ethnic pride. Despite the possession of British/EU passports, the contested nature of the journey suggests that individuals are implicitly denied a British and/ or European identity. For individuals to fully acquire such an identity they would have to adopt additional attributes of identity, or even acquire 'specific forms of double consciousness' (Gilroy, 1993: p. 1). This situation would be difficult to achieve as self-perceptions and the perceptions of 'white others' have an overwhelming influence on the construction and reconstruction of individual and collective identifications. Accordingly, travel encounters and experiences encourage individuals to reflect on their own diasporic existences and identities, particularly the non-British/non-European attributes of ethnic identification.

Conclusions and Research Implications

The view concerning the need for individuals to transcend the social dislocations of everyday life, through participation in more socially binding experiences (MacCannell, 1976), does not fully explain the nature of the aspirations and experiences of members of the UK black Caribbean community. This perspective places too much emphasis on people's desire for a deeper involvement with another society and culture, without accounting for the views of those who actually anticipate (or experience) social conflict in specific environments. Racialised travel experiences stand as a microcosm of the social conflict and racial interaction existing between black and white groups within the wider societal context.

Although the 'white gaze' manifests a perception of black visitors/travellers as 'threatening' and/or 'dangerous', the dilemma alludes to how 'white others' are also similarly perceived. Travel encounters do not, as Urry (1995: p. 166) assumed, fully reflect mutual 'familiarisation' with other cultures and societies; nor do they always denote, as Rojek (1993a: p. 199) maintained, the de-differentiation of boundaries between 'local' and 'foreign' cultures. Furthermore, the view that tourists are often in search of 'new places to visit and capture' (Urry, 1992: p. 5), does not fully apply to an understanding of the travel motivations of members of the black community. The search for familiar and secure experiences would perhaps be a better indicator for explaining people's aspirations and preferences. Empirical studies ought to empirically examine the methods and types of travel that are likely to reduce racialised incidents and encounters.

Black visitors can potentially become 'elements of spectacle' in white communities and destinations, where their socio-physical movements are under close surveillance of the 'white gaze'. Although the 'white gaze' may not always be founded on disapproving perceptions and negative images of 'black others', but on curiosity and intrigue perhaps, it does have a unifying ability to provoke feelings of isolation and desolation in white areas. Given that black cultures and societies have been widely represented in negative terms, it may be difficult to convince members of the black community that public perceptions are not always racially motivated. Past experiences of racialism, whether personally encountered or encountered by 'significant others' (e.g. colleagues, friends and relatives), would explain why individuals may be overly suspicious of the 'white gaze'; whether or not it is racially intended. Black visitors are often viewed as a threat to the social order and norms of particular communities. Like Bauman's (1991: p. 56) conceptual description of the 'stranger', the black visitor is also perceived to 'bring the outside to the inside, and poison the comfort of order with suspicion of chaos'.

Importantly, racialised experiences are likely to influence people's perceptions and impressions of particular destinations, and overshadow positive experiences. Yet given the structural circumstances of racism apparent in everyday life, people's perceptions are arguably preconditioned within the (metropolitan) home environment. Informatively, the problems individuals experience during particular movements may compel them to reflect on their own roles, statuses and identities. Racialised encounters arguably confirm an individual's limited association with

identities that may be English, British or European, but at the same time verify a sense of being non-white.

Black Caribbeans are routinely marginalised from experiencing the possible social benefits of tourism, including: recreational pleasure; educational awareness; self-actualisation; social esteem; and mutual interaction. This is despite the fact that they have a legitimate right as British and European citizens to travel freely throughout the territories concerned. The problems experienced may relate to the fact that UK black citizens are popularly perceived as a threat to the social and cultural fabric of European societies. Consequently, future investigations ought to consider the broader socio-political rights of individuals to travel to places unrestricted by the actions and/or reactions of others, that is, to enjoy the benefits of tourism experiences without prejudice or discrimination. Given that black groups are increasingly faced with social inequalities and injustices during their various travellings, it is essential that these concerns reach the widest audience of academics, policy makers and representatives of the travel and tourism industry. Consequent strategies for achieving mutual exchanges, constructive experiences and positive encounters may then develop to the socio-cultural advantage of ethnic minority groups.

However, members of the black community should not always be perceived as 'passive victims' of marginalisation and social exclusion. A detailed enquiry, focusing on how visitors construct forms and strategies of resistance to socially controlling situations and encounters, would perhaps develop a clearer understanding of the nature of power-bound relationships in tourism and travel. By drawing on a range of self-empowered narratives and less negative experiences of tourism, future research could possibly ascertain ways in which individuals are able to celebrate their right to travel and their freedom to participate in the tourism experience. This would further illustrate how tourism encounters and events help verify or reconstruct people's individual and collective identities.

Studies also need to be attentive to the problems associated with the comodification of tourism experiences, especially as some ethnic minority communities are economically disenfranchised from full participation in tourism experiences. This concern would certainly have some relevance for UK back communities, especially as sections of this community are faced with low incomes, high unemployment rates and labour market exclusion (Skellington, 1992; Leslie, 1998; Pilkington, 2003). Nevertheless, it would be mistaken to claim that black Caribbeans wish to participate in the same or similar experiences as other UK tourists. Involvement in socially familiar experiences and culturally specific encounters may feature as a central objective in the decision to participate in tourism activities, especially the desire to interact with members of the African-Caribbean diaspora and/or travel to the ancestral homeland.

Attention to the experiences of other UK minority groups (e.g. Jewish, Irish and Pakistani communities) would help develop a wider analysis of racialised forms of travel. This would encourage other social dimensions to emerge, particularly with respect to aspects of ethnicity, gender and religion. Studies which focus on the structural and cultural barriers of participation, or which aim to identify strategies for challenging tourism's social barriers, would reflect the importance of achieving social equity and justice within tourism situations and contexts.

Acknowledgements

Notes

1. Despite the recent conceptual movement towards locating 'black Britishness' as a significant appellation for Britain's black community (see Kwesi Owusu's edited text: *Black British Culture and Society*, 2000), the authors of this paper have deliberately avoided using this term as a possible descriptor because of the ideological and cultural implications associated with the racialised dimensions of 'British identity'. Nonetheless, it should be acknowledged that the increasing presence of third- and fourth-generation members of the black community in the UK may mean that mediations of 'black Britishness' could increasingly come to the forefront of both analytical and self-interpretations of the identification process. With this point in mind, it should be noted that this article significantly incorporates the perspectives of first and second generations.

2. This term is used in a rather general sense as there are notable difficulties in defining the peculiarities of European racism. Both Miles (1994) and Balibar (2002) highlight the complexities of perceiving racism as something which is European-wide and based on common structures, processes and practices. Miles (1994), for instance, acknowledges the reality of 'interior racisms' (1994, p. 201) in Europe and ways in which those racisms reflect a 'range of ideologies and practices in an undefined number of European nation-states' (1994:202). Nevertheless, his work strongly implies that any explanation for the origin of European racism ought to consider the relevance of the historical development of capitalism within Europe.

3. Meethan (2001) raises similar arguments concerning the need to account for the power-geometry within global tourism, especially by highlighting the differential effects that flows of tourists, cultures and capital have on tourist societies.

4. See also Goulbourne's (2002: p. 179) discussion concerning the importance of visits back home, especially in terms of maintaining self- and communal identities, encouraging stronger kinship ties and social networks, and enhancing one's general 'well-being'.

5. Stephenson (1997, 2004) provides ethnographic-based illustrations concerning ways in which multicultural destinations can potentially encourage individuals from the wider Caribbean diaspora to participate in shared cultural experiences and intercultural exchanges.

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