THE OTHER MOTHERS IN CARYL PHILLIPS'S *THE FINAL PASSAGE* AND *THE LOST CHILD*

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ABSTRACT

THE OTHER MOTHERS IN CARYL PHILLIPS'S *THE FINAL PASSAGE* AND *THE LOST CHILD*

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This thesis explores the fictional motherhood representations in Caryl Phillips's novels *The Final Passage* (1995) and *The Lost Child* (2015) through the critical lens of matricentric feminism. Although there is an extensive body of scholarship focusing on these novels from various perspectives, there seems to be a gap in exploring their motherhood representations, which Phillips successfully treats. Phillips, in these novels, presents plural Other motherhood experiences in various contexts. Thus, his novels merit an intersectional reading to comprehend these mother characterisations. With an aim to contribute to the existing scholarship in that regard, this thesis analyses Phillips's plural mother characters by employing the theoretical framework of matricentric feminism in order to make use of its intersectional focus. It, then, argues that by offering plural and, particularly, Other mother figures in these novels, Caryl Phillips problematises the idealised, universal, and traditional conceptions of

motherhood. In so doing, he deconstructs the normative and patriarchal conceptions of motherhood while he lays bare the socio-political and economic inequalities, such as race, class, and colonialism, which affect the experiences of his characters' mothering(s). As a result of these analyses, this thesis also asserts that Phillips achieves to have a matrifocal narrative not in *The Final Passage* but in *The Lost Child*, which he wrote thirty years later.

Keywords: motherhood, other mothers, matricentric feminism, *The Final Passage*, *The Lost Child*

ÖZ

CARYL PHILLIPS'İN *THE FINAL PASSAGE* VE *THE LOST CHILD* ROMANLARINDA ÖTEKİ ANNELER

GÜZEN, Aybüke
Yüksek Lisans, İngiliz Edebiyatı Bölümü
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Bu tez, Caryl Phillips'in *The Final Passage* ve *The Lost Child* romanlarındaki annelik temsillerini annemerkezli feminizm çerçevesinde inceler. Bu romanlara farklı açılardan odaklanan kapsamlı bir literatür olsa da Phillips'in bu romanlarda başarılı bir şekilde resmettiği annelik temsillerini analiz açısından literatürde bir boşluk görünmektedir. Phillips bu romanlarında çeşitli bağlamlarda çoklu Öteki anne örnekleri sunar. Bu nedenle, romanları, bu çoğul anne tasvirlerini anlayabilmek için kesişimsel bir okuma gerektirir. Bu bağlamda var olan literatüre katkıda bulunmayı amaçlayan bu tez, kesişimsel odağından faydalanmak amacıyla annemerkezli feminizm teorik çerçevesinden faydalanarak Phillips'in çoğul Öteki anne karakterlerini inceler. Böylece bu tez, Caryl Phillips'in bu romanlarda çoğul ve özellikle de Öteki anne tasvirleri sunarak, idealize edilmiş, evrensel olarak kabul

görmüş ve geleneksel kabul edilen annelik konseptlerini sorunsallaştırdığını iddia eder. Bu şekilde, Phillips bir yandan karakterlerinin annelik deneyimlerini etkileyen ırk, sınıf ve emperyalizm gibi sosyo-politik ve ekonomik eşitsizlikleri açığa çıkarırken, bir yandan da normatif ve ataerkil annelik kavramlarını yapıbozuma uğratır. Bu analizlerin sonucunda, bu tez aynı zamanda, Phillips'in *The Final Passage*'ta değil ama otuz yıl sonra yazdığı *The Lost Child*'da anaerkil bir anlatım sergilediğini ileri sürer.

Anahtar Kelimeler: annelik, Öteki anneler, annemerkezli feminizm, *The Final Passage, The Lost Child*

To my mother and sisters, who have been othermothers to me, and my grandmother, whom I have recently lost to eternity

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Motherhood representations in literature, in other words, "literary mothers", might be shaped in accordance with the social, cultural, economic or political conditions of the times when they are written. How literary motherhood representations could unveil women's subjugation and/or empowerment under unequal conditions of race, social class, economic status, patriarchy and colonialism have been hot topics in recent literary studies. Themes such as motherhood, mother/daughter relationships, absent fathers, and/or "disrupted" families have been particularly welcomed in African-American and Caribbean literature. Thus, many literary works of these literature(s), in particular by women writers such as Toni Morrison, Jamaica Kincaid and Jean Rhys, have been explored in terms of their treatment of the issues of motherhood. However, understandably, there has not been much emphasis on the male writers' representation of motherhood in their work. Yet, in the scope of this thesis, I analyse the representations of motherhood(s) by the Caribbean-born British writer Caryl Phillips, and I focus on his debut novel, *The Final Passage* (1985) and one of his latest novels, *The Lost Child* (2015). I argue that by offering plural and, particularly, Other mother figures in these novels, Caryl Phillips problematises the idealised, universal, and traditional conceptions of motherhood. Hence, he deconstructs the normative and patriarchal conceptions of motherhood while he lays bare the socio-political and

economic inequalities such as race, class, patriarchy, and colonialism, which affect the experiences of his characters' mothering(s). In this thesis, I also assert that Phillips achieves *matrifocal narrative* not in *The Final Passage* but in *The Lost Child*, which he wrote thirty years later.

In order to highlight the parallelism between the aim of this study and Phillips's fiction, first, I would like to discuss Phillips's writing style and motivation. Although here I count Caryl Phillips as a part of Caribbean Literature and define him as "Caribbean-originated", all these terms could be questioned because of his transcultural and hybrid background. He acknowledges this hybridity when he is also unable to categorise his identity with "the full complexity of who [he is] – [his] plural self" (*Color Me Engli*sh 123). Born in St. Kitts and left for England with his parents for economic reasons when he was just four months old, Caryl Phillips has lived and taught in the USA for many years now. In addition to his plural identity, his rich and versatile writing makes it difficult to classify him under any category of literature. About this issue, he states the following in an interview:

> When I walk into a bookshop I don't know if I'm going to be in British Literature, or if there's going to be a section called Black Literature and I'm going to be there. Or sometimes they have a section called Caribbean Literature. And then, if they don't look at my picture, they might think I'm a woman, and I might be in Women's Literature. (Wade)

It seems that Phillips here acknowledges the hybridity and versatility of his oeuvre. Whereas he, in this quote, focuses on the kaleidoscope of his oeuvre, he also highlights his hybridity as an individual and writer. With his Caribbean background, his Blackness, and his empathetic voice in the representations of females, he could be categorised in any of these kinds of literature above. On the other hand, albeit the

difficulty of categorisation of him and his oeuvre, he is still regarded as the "father" of "Afro-British fiction" by many (Allen).

In Phillips's novels, as it is the case with many other Caribbean-originated writers, the estranged, broken and absent families and/or family members and the relations in these families are recurring themes. Thus, Caryl Phillips has been referred to as a "pessimist" and "nihilist" writer (Ledent "Family and Identity" 70), which he acknowledges by remarking, "I have never really had a very optimistic view of things" (Davidson 93). Nonetheless, he might be labelled as such because of his drive in his writing. Phillips defines the Carib islands of his origin as "a region where Africa met Europe on somebody else's soil" (Bishop and McLean) which seems a precise summary of the forced "fate" of the islands as a result of the colonisation and plantation. Driven by this "fate" of the islands, Phillips points out the responsibility of writing the Caribbean's silenced history as a Caribbean-originated writer. He remarks in an interview, "You do become aware of the possibility of being somebody who can identify a history and perhaps do something about redressing the imbalance of some of the ills and falsehoods that have been perpetrated by others about your own history" (Davidson 96-97). He, thus, emphasises his goal in (re)writing the history of the Caribbean islands, which have been conquered, subjugated and exploited for centuries and then ignored or misrepresented in the dominant Eurocentric history writing.

Likewise, in one of his latest interviews, he again draws attention to his aim of (re)writing the history in his oeuvre and indicates:

> There is a definite attempt to repair historical inaccuracy and to repair an omission, a complete silence. I guess that silence becomes very personal when you're a little kid at school in England and you're not in the history books. Or when you are in the history books, it's not really an image of yourself you want to see. (Agathocleous)

In these quotations, from what Phillips is inspired in his writing and how his writing serves to a purpose becomes apparent. England's influence on him as an outcast Black boy and later as a Black writer is also observable in these words. Moreover, I argue that with his critical and political attitude in history writing of "his" lands from the colonised perspective, Phillips fights against the *epistemic violence* of the Westerners on the Caribbean because the Caribbean has been seen and represented as one of the "Third World" lands. Therefore, I underscore, rather than being represented by the Westerner's gaze, Phillips is in action to "speak" for (his)stories in his writing (Spivak 76).

However much pessimistic or nihilist his writings seem, Phillips, in fact, believes in the transforming power of literature. According to him, literature has a purpose: to make the silenced be heard and tell the untold and veiled (his)stories of the Others. He states this purpose in the following excerpt:

> I believe passionately in the moral capacity of fiction to wrench us out of our ideological burrows and force us to engage with a world that is clumsily transforming itself, a world that is peopled with individuals we might otherwise never meet in our daily lives . . . for literature is plurality in action; it embraces and celebrates a place of no truths, it relishes ambiguity, and it deeply respects the place where everybody has the right to be understood . . . and it judges neither party. (*Color Me English* 16)

Through these lines, his purpose and style in his oeuvre could be clearly understood. He writes the histories of the African and the Caribbean in a way that has not been written by the "European" before, and he writes the stories of the oppressed from the

perspective of the oppressed, whether it is Black or White, the child or the mother, and the mother or the father. He, in a sense, “rescues” the oppressed from the imposed ideologies of the oppressor and builds a new frame to look again at the silenced individuals and/or societies, achieving “empathy” for all.

Driven by such motivations in his writing, Caryl Phillips is one of the quintessential examples of political writing in literature. He has been appraised for having a kaleidoscopic voice, and he is a remarkable author when it also comes to representing the female voice. Still, in accordance with my review of literature, the Caribbean and African-American writing have majorly been explored through their women writers when it comes to feminist readings. However, Caryl Phillips as a male writer has also been regarded as one of the most empathetic writers of the female voice. Upon a question about his representations of women empathetically and successfully, he expresses the following in an interview:

> I’ve always felt, not schematically but I think intuitively, that women get a raw deal, in the same way I’ve always felt black people get a raw deal, the same way as I’ve always felt working-class people get a raw deal. I’m just interested in people who get a raw deal, and without being too reductive about it, particularly as somebody who came of age in the years of Thatcher, I’ve always felt a sort of empathy to try to articulate the stories of people who have been misunderstood, or marginalised, or treated with a certain indifference, treated with a certain degree of contempt, all of which, I’ve felt, has been visited upon me, in many different ways. (Clingman, “The nature of empathy” 598)

As seen in these remarkable words of him, which in a sense summarises his oeuvre and his aim in writing, Caryl Phillips’s successful writing and representations are inspired by the marginalised and the silenced, whether Black, working-class, woman, or mother. Even though he does not identify motherhood as one of those who “get a raw deal”, in his novels, it is palpable that he represents the marginalised Black,

immigrant, slave and working-class mothers in order to articulate their stories. Therefore, by claiming that Phillips characterises "Other" mothers, I refer to his characterisation of marginalised, stigmatised and otherised mothers who face the inequalities of gender, race, class, and colonialism.

With his empathetic female voice[1], I underline that Phillips's oeuvre merits closer feminist readings. As the "father" of Afro-British literature, he has depicted sensational mother figures in his oeuvre. Nevertheless, surprisingly, his characterisation of these mothers has been neglected in literary studies. Hence, in an attempt to avoid an "essentialist" perspective on analysing the female characterisations by solely female writers, as in motherhood representations by only mother writers, I aim to look at the representations of mothers from a male writer's perspective in this study. I put forward that Carly Phillips has presented his mother characters quite empathetically and in order to voice the silenced and the ignored, he represents quintessential Other mother figures. To elaborate on this, in the rest of this chapter, I will explain the aim of this study.

[1] I can also claim that his decentring the conventional modes of writing in his narratives (i.e., mixing the past and present times in the narrative, so disrupting the linear timeline, and complicating the dialogues of the characters with the narrator's voice) sets an example for *écriture feminine.* In *écriture feminine,* the traditional and linear narrative techniques are deconstructed in opposition to patriarchal narratives and phallocentric language. However, through *écriture feminine*, Eurocentric "white" canons could also be opposed, which Phillips does in his context. Although *écriture feminine* could be thought of solely as "women's writing". However, according to Hélène Cixous, male writers, such as James Joyce, could also write in this mode of writing. Therefore, I believe Phillips can also be considered among the writers of this "women's writing".

1.1. The Aim of the Study

This thesis aims to explore the depictions of plural Other motherhood(s) in Phillips's two novels, *The Final Passage* and *The Lost Child*, through the critical framework of matricentric feminism. As matricentric feminism and the scholars of motherhood studies have emphasised, motherhood, its concept, practice and identity have been overlooked in feminist studies and discussions. However, drawing attention to motherhood, its various understandings through also its literary representations could pave the way for "change" and could be a step further toward equality, and this is one of the aims of this study. Since matricentric feminism has been a feminist theory building its tenets on the concept of motherhood from myriad perspectives, fields, and scholars, this thesis employs its useful tools in order to analyse the mother figures in these novels. In this part of the thesis, I provide a brief introduction to the novels in the scope of this study and underline their significance. I also point out the aim of this thesis which distinguishes it from the hitherto studies on these novels.

Caryl Phillips's debut novel, *The Final Passage*, winner of the Malcolm X Award, is set in the 1950s in a small Caribbean island and England. The novel opens up a space for "the Windrush generation", although it is not stated overtly. The Windrush generation refers to the massive immigration from the Caribbean to England, starting in 1948 with the Empire Windrush ship (Maier 127). After WW2, this flow of immigration was expected to fill the labour force gap in England; however, the white British did not welcome this generation's arrival. This "unwelcome" could be observed in the novel through the struggles that the protagonist Leila and the other

Black immigrants' experience in England. In *The Final Passage*, as in the other works he wrote later, Phillips was inspired by the stories of his mother and father. His parents migrated to England in 1958, as a part of the Windrush generation, to seek better opportunities for their son. Phillips indicates in his infamous essay compilation *Color Me English*, "The truth was they had crossed the water and come to Britain not so they could feel at home…They came to Britain to get ahead and grow, and to provide me with opportunities that I would never have had on the small twelve-mile by six-mile island that I was born on" (306). Thus, his depictions of his parents' arrival in England in this quote resonates his characterisation of the immigrant characters in *The Final Passage*, especially in the immigration of Leila to England for her son's future.

The Final Passage, thus, dominantly embodies postcolonial themes such as the sense of home, belongingness, displacement, cultural and racial hybridity, exodus and exile, the condition of immigrants, and the economic and political forces behind the migrations. Expectedly, the existing literature on the novel exploring these issues is extensive. However, the novel does not treat only postcolonial matters successfully. It also encompasses empathetic mother characters, so it merits analysis from a maternal perspective in an intersectional reading with its historical, political, social, and cultural implications. In that regard, in this thesis, I will analyse the plural mother figures of the novel, Leila, her mother, Beverley and Millie, and the sociological, economic and political conditions under which these Other mother figures are to mother their children.

The Lost Child, again a "sorrowful and moving" (Smith) work of Phillips, as one of his latest novels which he wrote three decades later than *The Final Passage*, embodies the signature themes of Phillips: fractured families, lonely and struggling individuals, the trajectory of slavery, and the "lost" children. The novel is an example of a frame narrative in which it unfolds three different stories. Similar to *The Final Passage*, *The Lost Child* also embodies autobiographical elements from Phillips's life. He admits, in *The Lost Child*, he had been inspired from his childhood and teenage years as the "only Black child" in the northern part of England, including his memories from the Moors murderers to the camp he had been to in Silverdale which was for underprivileged children. About writing *The Lost Child*, he indicates:

> Five years ago I sat down to try and begin work on a novel that I knew would, in part, be set on the moors between Yorkshire and Lancashire and would have some echoes of sitting alone reading Emily Brontë and childhood fears of Brady and Hindley [the murderers of the Moor murders cases]). ("Finding The Lost Child")

As a result of such inspiration, *The Lost Child* has been mostly referred to in literature in terms of its treatment of autobiographical elements from Phillips's life and the novel's intertextual qualities, particularly for its dialogue with *Wuthering Heights*. It has also been analysed for its lonely female depictions; however, its mother characters, Monica and the former slave mother, have not been particularly explored.

Looking at the scholarship that explored the themes in these novels, I would like to underline that there is a lacuna in the literary field in terms of reading the mother characters of *The Final Passage* and *The Lost Child*. Moreover, matricentric feminism has not yet been employed in many literary studies so far to explore mother characters in fiction although it could be a quite useful theory. To contribute to the existing

literature, I focus on particularly the concept of representations of motherhood(s) in Phillips's two novels by using matricentric feminist theory in this study. These two novels foreground quintessential motherhood experiences through their marginalised and "dysfunctional" Other mother characters in various contexts. Exploring how these mother characters are marginalised, otherised, and then become "dysfunctional" in their motherings can lay bare the unequal conditions of the contexts where these mothers are represented. These conditions appear to be looked over in the idealisation and universalisation of the traditional conceptions of motherhood. Thus, I believe such an analysis of Phillips's mother characters may contribute to understanding the inequalities and oppressions imposed on motherhood and womanhood and thus can debunk these traditional conceptions. Such a revelation, then, could be one more step forward achieving equality for "all" women, which matricentric feminism also aims for.

A comparative study of *The Final Passage* and *The Lost Child* is particularly valuable. Phillips may often be known for his representations of the Caribbean female characters; however, these two novels provide a more extensive example for women and mother characters together. Whereas *The Final Passage* presents plural Caribbean mothers who are exposed to the same history and brought up in the same postcolonial land yet experience different motherings, *The Lost Child* offers more diverse mothers through the characterisation of a white working-class and an emancipated Black slave mother. Moreover, whilst *The Final Passage* presents a setting in the postcolonial Caribbean and England in the 1950s when England "welcomes" the Commonwealth countries, *The Lost Child* represents England as a colonising empire in the eighteenth-

century and a post-war England image of the twentieth-century. In this regard, since I aim to explore the plural Other motherhood conceptions of Phillips's novels, these two novels offer significant material for the analyses of various literary mothers. Furthermore, since there is a thirty-year gap between the publications of these two novels, analysing how Phillips's narrative style and representations of mothers have changed is also worthy of consideration.

With these aims in mind, in the following chapter, I will present matricentric feminism as a pertinent theoretical framework for this study. Since matricentric feminism is inclusive and it has a multi-directional approach as well as it is interested in resisting the oppression of mothers, it offers suitable tenets to analyse Phillips's plural mother characters in their specific contexts.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

2.1. Motherhood(s) in Fiction

In this chapter, I will first offer an overview of the significant studies that focus on various motherhood representations in fiction. A brief overview, in that regard, can be particularly helpful in comprehending common representations of motherhood in literature, their background and possible implications for further analyses of literary mothers, which is also the aim of this study. Hence, such an overview will also help position this study within the existing literary mother's analyses. Drawing on these analyses of motherhood(s) in fiction, I will then introduce a theoretical framework, *matricentric feminism*, which could be a pertinent and fruitful approach for the analysis of Phillips's representations of motherhood in *The Final Passage* and *The Lost Child.*

The perspectives toward motherhood, its identity and practice have changed throughout centuries. Thus, it is commonly accepted by many that "[m]otherhood offers women a site of both power and oppression, self-esteem and self-sacrifice, reverence and debasement" (Hansen 3). As a result, such opposite representations of motherhood could be frequently encountered in literary texts since the early depictions of motherhood in fiction. On the one side of these representations, mother figures have

been displayed as strong, empowered, and self-autonomous—but at the same time "bad" (e.g., Magdalene, Demeter, Lady Macbeth, Adah of *Second Citizen*, Meridian Hill of *Meridian*, Sethe of *Beloved*). On the other side, they have been selfless, angel-like, and devoted—which are traditionally considered as the "ideal" and "good" characteristics of motherhood (e.g., Madonna, Mrs Sowerby of *The Secret Garden*, Hester *of The Scarlet Letter*). The perspectives toward these binary understandings have been largely shaped by the societal norms of the eras, cultural codes, and the doctrines of different feminist movements. However, from ancient times until very recently, it seems that it has not been entirely possible to embrace the mothers/mother characters as in their plurality and to recognise the significance of the context for the "performance" of motherhood identity. Rather, these mother figures and motherhood(s) have been easily assigned into labels such as "good" or "bad" based on the traditional expectations.

Nevertheless, mother figures have also been depicted in fiction through their struggles and being torn apart between these binary oppositions, as well as through their conflicts with society and traditional expectations of mothering. Elaine T. Hansen summarises the conflict of motherhood in her book, where she analyses various literary mothers, "as a simple one: the interests of the individual woman versus the interests of her child, female self-affirmation versus the institution of motherhood" (69). Thus, many analyses of fictional works have focused on either side of these binaries and/or displayed the struggles resulting from these dualities. Yet many others have also highlighted the alternatives and plurality of literary mothers, by which they endeavour to deconstruct these binary understandings in fiction and/or real life. Thus, the rest of

this part will explore the changing perspectives toward motherhood, significant studies which analyse binary representations of mothers and their consequent struggles, and the studies that aim to empower and voice the literary mothers in diverse literature(s).

To start with, Dale Salwak offers overall commonalities of literary mothers in her short article "Motherhood in Literature", by tracing them along literary history and highlighting the various and plural representations of motherhood in different periods. She indicates that in literary texts, "[e]ach woman responds differently to the travails of motherhood. Each had her fate connected with a particular man. Each reflects the social realities of the author's time and place" (Salwak). There have been, she notes, "degrading" images of mothers (e.g., Euripides' Medea, Tolstoy's Anna Karenina, Flaubert's Emma Bovary) in literature as well as their "idealised" depictions (e.g., Helen Graham of *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*, Mrs March of *Little Women*). These depictions, she maintains, have varied from "naive, incompetent, even silly" to "selfless, spiritual, tender, protective, reassuring or self-assured" ones in fiction. However, Salwak indicates, whether they have been represented as "good" or "bad" mothers, these literary mothers have contributed to our understanding of motherhood.

As I stated, these various conceptions and representations of motherhood have been shaped in accordance with the societal expectations and constructions, cultural and contextual codes, and the feminist movements. For instance, the second wave-feminism, particularly lead by Simone-de Beauvoir, degraded motherhood seeing it as one of the main reasons of women's oppression and otherness. They argued that unless women reject motherhood overall, the liberation and the autonomy of the women from

the control of patriarchy will not be achieved (Neyer and Bernardi 165). Since the focus of the second-wave was on women's reproductive and abortion rights, their autonomy and control over their own bodies, this opposition toward motherhood could be understandable. However, this opposition seems to have ignored motherhood and its studies overall to include it in the feminism's resistance, fight, and theorisation. For example, Cristina Herrera and Paula Sanmartín, analysing common representations of literary mothers in Caribbean literature, refer to the lack of theorisation of motherhood in Caribbean literature. Thus, they pose the following question to be considered: "Could this lack of scholarship be a result of secondwave feminism that theorized motherhood as an impediment to full female agency and autonomy?" (3). This questioning could be significant in comprehending the changing perspectives toward motherhood in literature, society and feminist scholarship.

Nevertheless, with the poststructuralist and postmodernist (so the third-wave) feminism(s), motherhood as well as womanhood has gained a plural definition. While the possible oppression of motherhood has been recognised, a space for its empowering and liberating power has been opened. Thus, motherhood has been affirmed and considered as a source of power to resist oppression (167). Similar to the perspectives of the third-wave feminists, motherhood in Black culture, particularly in African-American and Caribbean, is seen as an identity of autonomy as well as agency. With the names such as Patricia Hill Collins, bell hooks and Alicia Walker, Black motherhood has been seen as a mainly resistant act towards colonialism and patriarchy. As Collins writes "motherhood can serve as a site where Black women express and learn the power of self-definition, the importance of valuing and respecting ourselves,

the necessity of self- reliance and independence, and a belief in Black women's empowerment" (176). However, she also indicates that there are controversial opinions on motherhood even in Black community. Whereas it could be a "site of resistance", it could also be "a truly burdensome condition that stifles their [Black women's] creativity, exploits their labor, and makes them partners in their own oppression" (176). Therefore, Collins highlights that portraying Black mothers as "superstrong Black mother" (176) has veiled the struggles and hardships these mothers went through during slavery and colonialism. Hence, she argues, these common stereotypical portrayals should be debunked to acknowledge their struggles as Black mothers as well. Since I claim that Phillips achieves this debunking and also presents the Black mothers with their struggles and oppression, this is a significant point in this study.

Black literature, which often employs the motherhood and maternal concerns in its scope, as a result, has reflected such conceptions of "strong" Black mothers; however, their struggles have been underemployed in literary texts. For example, Remi Akujobi explores the conceptions of motherhood in African literature and culture and asserts that there have been different representations in literature (so, understandings in society) of African motherhood. However, he indicates that motherhood has been widely acknowledged as a sacred or mystified entity in the African context. Especially the self-sacrificing mother figure has been one of the central ideas of motherhood. Moreover, he points to a significant issue and underlines that the mother and the nation/country have been accepted as the same. He indicates, "Love of mother and love of nation have been taken as one and the same. The symbolism of the enslaved

and exploited motherland was at the heart of the anti-colonial nationalist struggles in Africa in the 1950s and early 1960s up to the point of independence" (2). This is particularly significant because Phillips's fictional works also present such implications.

On the other hand, Akujobi notes, according to certain critics of African literature, this analogy between the mother and Mother country has been used by the patriarchal literature so as to silence women. He puts forward that some female writers, however, have not remained silent against that, and they reflected the motherhood experience in its complexity rather than mystifying it (3). Exploring Molara Ogundipe-Leslie's work, Akujobi highlights how the mystical woman and mother figures of Africa, such as "woman as goddess or as Supreme Mother, self-sacrificing and suffering willingly and silently", are challenged in her work (3). However, Akujobi maintains that although "Mother Africa" has been liberated and it gained independence, the mothers of Africa are still subjugated (3), which is again an important point for this study. Thus, Black, African-American and Caribbean motherhood and their representations have been controversial, and although their "empowered" and "strong" representations have been common, the other side of their motherhood has also been aimed to be foregrounded.

As can be seen in the studies so far, the (Black or white) motherhood is represented in dualities, and it has been characterised and represented in accordance with its contemporary ideologies. On the other side, though, some maternal scholars have focused on empowering and voicing mother representations in fiction, thus in real-life,

especially after the third-wave, inclusive and empowering feminism. For instance, Marianne Hirsch, as an outstanding scholar in literary mother analyses, dwells on the silenced mothers and daughters in myths and canonical literary works in her ground-breaking work *The Mother/Daughter Plot*. She writes that her book "foregrounds the 'other woman,' the mother, in relation to the 'other child,' the daughter" (2). She aims to give voice to the silenced and ignored mothers and daughters in psychoanalytic frameworks and conventional literary plots. For example, she questions what happens to "powerless, maternal, emotional, and virtually silent" Jocasta in *Oedipus Rex*, whose narrative is absent there (2). Then, she presents Toni Morrison's *Beloved* as a counter and voiced plot compared to Jocasta's silenced story. As opposed to Jocasta, Sethe of *Beloved* is given a chance and space in the plot to tell *her* story, Hirsch writes.

Hirsch maintains that the mother's "representation is controlled by her object status, but her discourse, when it is voiced, moves her from object to subject" (12). Therefore, in her book, her goal is to subvert the *object* status of the mother in novels as well as in psychoanalytic texts. She argues that if the maternal voice is desired to be achieved—in other words, if the mother is wanted to be represented as a *subject* in literary plots—the mother should speak "with two voices" (197), as a mother and a daughter, when she speaks to her daughter. Hirsch asserts that only then the mother and daughter can speak the "unspeakable" of their stories. This is what, she claims, *Beloved* achieves in its narrative (197).

In *Narrating Mothers*, another work aiming to "voice" the mother, Brenda O. Daly and Maureen T. Reddy benefit from the maternal studies by Rich, Hirsch, Collins and

other scholars of sociology, psychoanalysis and literature for their analysis of fictional mothers. Daly and Reddy claim that the fictional or theoretical texts that revolve around the concept of motherhood are mostly daughter-centred. Thus, these texts are "insufficient" to present the maternal experience and/or to achieve maternal writing. They assert, "[e]ven in women's accounts of motherhood, maternal perspectives are strangely absent. We most often hear daughters' voices in both literary and theoretical texts *about* mothers, mothering, and motherhood, [not *from* mothers] even in those written by feminists who are mothers" (1; my emphasis). Thus, by applying theories from feminism, sociology and psychoanalysis in their analysis, they strive to identify and explore the voice of mothers and the experience of mothering in the fiction of women writers who "have consciously taken maternal perspectives in their fictions and autobiographies" (3).

Daly and Reddy also claim that to understand the mother's voice, feminists need to acknowledge the power and powerlessness of the mothers rather than mythicising or devaluing them. While doing so, they refer to Gloria Joseph who also comments on recognising the power of the mothers in the narrative. Joseph claims that there are fewer victimised and powerless daughter narratives in Black writing because the black daughters recognise the powerlessness of their mothers earlier than the white daughters, due to the racial subjugation (qtd in Daly and Reddy 7). Many Black women writers, therefore, draw attention to the power and powerlessness of the Black mother in their fiction.

Another significant study worth mentioning here regarding its aim to voice motherhood(s) in fiction is *Textual Mothers/Maternal Texts,* edited by Elizabeth Podnieks and Andrea O'Reilly. Podnieks and O'Reilly join the discussions of maternal/matrifocal voice in literary texts, highlighting that mothers' narratives in literary and theoretical texts lack the mother's voice and foreground daughter's narrative. They, therefore, claim that they aspire in this book to direct a shift from daughter-centred narratives to mother-centred narratives. In their argumentation, the writers especially draw on the works of Daly and Reddy, and Hirsch. In so doing, they aim to explore and develop the mother's voice in literary and theoretical texts so that the concept and the practice of motherhood can be understood more deeply.

Podnieks and O'Reilly include analyses of diverse literary mothers from different dimensions, including race, gender, class, nation and abilities. They, thus, highlight the diversity of motherhood in maternal texts. They state that there is a connection between life and text, and following that connection, they aim to analyse "how textual representations reflect and help to define or (re)shape the realities of women and families, and how mothering and being a mother are political, personal, and creative narratives unfolding within both the pages of a book and the spaces of a life" (2). Therefore, they write:

> *Textual Mothers/Maternal Texts* examines how authors use textual spaces to accept, embrace, negotiate, reconcile, resist, and challenge traditional conceptions of mothering and maternal roles, and how they offer alternative practises and visions for mothers in the present and future. (1-2)

In other words, the authors make a connection between the text and life and aim to unveil the "truths" of motherhood by underscoring the social and political implications

in mother representations. They call this act of unveiling as "unmasking motherhood", which seems to resonate Phillips's writing and his motherhood representations.

Informed by the discussions of these *foremother* scholars about the various fictional motherhood(s) in literature(s), in this study, I also aim to analyse the literary mothers in Phillips's fiction and their possible implications regarding the contexts they are presented in. Sharing a common goal, I will draw my analyses on the literary mothers on the scholarly discussions cited here and join these discussions of motherhood representations in fiction through an analysis of Phillips's novels *The Final Passage* and *The Lost Child*. I put forward that Phillips does not mythicise or belittle the concept of motherhood. Instead, he offers mother representations through their struggles due to social, economic and political conditions and the expectations on this identity. Hence, I argue that similar to what the maternal scholars here suggested, Phillips in these novels "unmask" motherhood. By this unmasking, I claim that after thirty years in his writing, Phillips achieves to have *matrifocal narrative* by "voicing" the mother character (rather than the daughter/son) and giving space to her narrative where she can tell her experiences as a mother.

As I presented, the literary studies so far have mostly benefited from sociological and psychoanalytical feminist lenses of motherhood to analyse literary motherings in fiction. This was probably because of the lack of a theorisation of motherhood in literature; however, since the 1990s, there has been an attempt to assemble all these discussions under the same roof and encourage more discussions through the theorisation of motherhood in *matricentric feminism*. This branch of feminism has

been a more inclusive theory that has enabled and embraced further studies of motherhood and its literary representations.

With my arguments in mind, in the following part, I will explain the tenets of *matricentric feminist* critical theory and discuss why it could be a fruitful theory for my reading of Phillips's mother characters.

2.2. Matricentric Feminism as a Theoretical Framework

"Motherhood . . . is the unfinished business of feminism"

— Andrea O'Reilly, *Matricentric Feminism: Theory, Activism and Practice*

Matricentric feminism could be seen as a newly flourished theoretical perspective, introduced to the academic scholarship by its foremother Andrea O'Reilly. Although O'Reilly has started and continued her studies on motherhood since the 1980s, the emergence of matricentric feminism corresponds to the late 1990s, and it developed and gained more interest in the 2000s. O'Reilly uses the term matricentric feminism to refer to "a mother centred mode of feminism" in her epochal book *Matricentric Feminism: Theory, Activism, Practice* (*3*). She indicates that she chooses to use "matricentric" instead of "maternal" in order to separate its entity and tenets from the theory of "maternalism", which regards motherhood as a patriarchal, traditional and instinctive concept (3). Building a feminist theory focused particularly on mothers, O'Reilly shows the necessity of a mother-centred feminism. She writes:

> [T]he category of mother is distinct from the category of woman and that many of the problems mothers face—social, economic, political, cultural, psychological, and so forth—are specific to women's role and identity as mothers. Indeed, mothers are oppressed under patriarchy as women and as mothers. Consequently, mothers need a matricentric mode of feminism organized from and for their particular identity and work as mothers. (*Matricentric Feminism* 2)

Thus, O'Reilly, as many other maternal scholars, highlights that feminism(s), which target the category of woman mainly, have not been sufficient to read the conditions of motherhood in literature or real-life. That is, the distinction of the mother's identity should have been highlighted more. As a result, this necessity has been aimed to be met by this theory considering different institutions and conditions affecting motherhood's conception and practice.

Matricentric feminism's ultimate goal is remarked by Petra Bueskens, who wrote the foreword for the book *Matricentric Feminism.* She indicates, "Indeed, *mothers offer a crucial standpoint* for social, political and economic change. Motherhood is an important category of analysis for understanding women's oppression" (xv; emphasis in the original). Similar to what Bueskens highlights, I also claim that the analyses of motherhood representations in literature in their relation to the social, political, and economic dimensions, which directly influence both the identity and the practice of motherhood, can reveal the reasons for the oppression of mothers as well as women. Thus, this revelation paves the way for a "change". Furthermore, as Hirsch indicates, "The multiplicity of 'women' is nowhere more obvious than for the figure of the mother, who is always both mother and daughter" (12). Therefore, a matricentric feminist theory, which focuses on multiplicity as well as the oppression of mothers, could be a quite appropriate tool for analysis of mother characters in literary texts.

Matricentric feminism can also enable an intersectional reading for literary texts thanks to its multidisciplinary constitution, because it "draws from many academic disciplines, including anthropology, history, literary studies, sociology, philosophy, psychology, sexuality studies, and women's studies, as well as from the established schools of academic feminism" (*Matricentric Feminism* 6). Moreover, in her theorisation of matricentric feminism, O'Reilly positions her theory by rising on the shoulders of many acknowledged scholars who study motherhood in various societies from different aspects such as "race, class, culture, ethnicity, sexuality, ability, age, and geographical location" (7). To exemplify, Nancy Chodorow, Adrienne Rich, Sara Ruddick, Marianne Hirsch, Patricia Hill Collins, and bell hooks, notable names in the studies of motherhood, have been among the scholars she has drawn on. Nevertheless, some of these maternal scholars, e.g., Ruddick, Rich, Chodorow, had targeted white, middle-class, European/American women mostly. Hence, there remained a discrepancy and lack in motherhood studies in terms of embracing multiple forms of motherhood(s), which is similar to the case of feminism until its third wave. O'Reilly herself also states that there has been an interest and focus on the concept of motherhood preceding her with these names; however, she has aimed to gather them under a single theory and develop an academic discipline which is more inclusive and interdisciplinary.

Matricentric feminism, therefore, has based its theory and understandings on embracing and emphasising plural motherhood(s) by also considering various factors affecting motherhood. O'Reilly indicates that "[t]he matricentric feminist theory . . .

understands mothering and motherhood to be culturally determined and variable, and is committed to exploring the diversity of maternal experience across race, class, culture, ethnicity, sexuality, ability, age, and geographical location" (7). In matricentric feminism, she maintains, "African American, Chicana, Latina, and indigenous motherhood theories are represented, as are theories concerned with mothers and disabilities, single mothers, working-class mothers, adoptive mothers, and young mothers" (12) so as to achieve the inclusivity and broadness in its scope. Such tenets of matricentric feminism make it quite useful to analyse diverse mother representations from different backgrounds of race, class, culture, and geography in Phillips's works.

Matricentric feminist theory may also provide various tools to analyse the representations of motherhood in literary texts. With an aim to benefit from them in my analysis of Phillips's mother representations, it is requisite to explain some of these terms here. In her book, Andrea O'Reilly introduces the "ten ideological assumptions of patriarchal motherhood" to unveil the normative discourses on motherhood. These assumptions are "essentialization, privatization, individualization, naturalization, normalization, idealization, biologicalization, expertization, intensification, and depoliticalization of motherhood" (14)[2]. It seems that by identifying these patriarchal

[2] It could be necessary here to define the assumptions which I do not employ within the scope of this study. O'Reilly defines essentialisation as "the basis of female identity" which supposes that only women could be mothers and they could be "whole" only through motherhood. Privatisation assumes motherhood to be only in the private sphere of home and individualization argues that "motherwork" is peculiar to only the mother. Biologicalisation attributes motherhood only to the mother who have blood ties with the child, which denies othermothers. O'Reilly refers to

motherhood assumptions, O'Reilly seems to underline that in order to *reconstruct* empowering understandings of motherhood, it is first required to acknowledge and *deconstruct* these patriarchal norms of motherhood. She also uses these tools to analyse literary mothers, such as in her analysis of Lionel Shriver's novel *We Need to Talk about Kevin.* In this study, she analyses how Shriver deconstructs *essentialisation, naturalisation,* and *idealisation* of patriarchal motherhood through her protagonist mother character Eva.

Among these assumptions, particularly, *naturalisation, normalisation, idealisation,* and *depoliticalisation* are of importance for this study. O'Reilly defines *naturalisation* as the common assumption which supposes that motherhood is an instinct that comes to all women, so "all women naturally know how to mother" (14). In *normalisation*, "maternal identity" is limited to the nuclear family, "[w]herein, the mother is a wife to a husband, and she assumes the role of the nurturer, and the husband assumes that of the provider" (14). This assumption seems to be driven by the traditional conceptions of motherhood and family with the industrialisation period, when the assumed distinction between men and women had deepened and "women's traits made them naturally appropriate for home and childcare, while men's traits made them more suitable for work outside of the home" (O'Reilly, *Encyclopedia* 546). Thus, motherhood might have turned into a norm peculiar to the mother in a nuclear family. Similarly, *idealisation* "sets unattainable expectations of and for mothers" (*Matricentric Feminism* 14), which must have also strengthened in and after the

expertisation and intensification as the assumptions who regard motherhood as an "intense", "consuming" and "expert driven" work (*Matricentric Feminism* 14).

industrial period. The notion of the ideal mother, O'Reilly states, assumes that the mother can be the only provider and nurturer for her child and "can do it all, instinctively and with ease" (14). However, "the actual care of children includes fathers, family members, friends, and childcare services" (*Encyclopedia* 546). Such a depiction of idealised motherhood results in mothers' "guilt and shame", and they experience these feelings due to these existent "unattainable expectations".

As the last significant normative conception, *depoliticalisation* "characterizes childrearing solely as a private and nonpolitical undertaking, with no social or political import" (*Matricentric Feminism* 14). However, the concept of motherhood, in fact, could be a significant element in comprehending the oppression of women under ideologies, and it might lead to a social and political change. Therefore, it seems to be quite important to reveal motherhood's political facet. These normative assumptions of patriarchal motherhood could be valuable to employ in order to look at the mother characterisations in Phillips's novels, since I argue that Phillips presents plural, "unideal," and "dysfunctional" motherhoods by foregrounding their contexts' social, economic, and political inequalities. Thus, I maintain, Phillips problematises and subverts these normative assumptions through his mother characters in his novels.

In my analyses, I will also make use of some of the tools provided by some maternal scholars, from whom matricentric feminism has drawn its creeds on. For instance, I will benefit from the readings on mother-daughter relationships since they could be useful to look at these relationships in Phillips's two novels. Adrienne Rich, for instance, has been an important figure in studying the mother-daughter bond and its

possible impacts on women. Her terms have also been used to explore literary mother-daughter depictions. Rich argues that mothers play a significant role in the daughter's motherhood and womanhood identifications and daughters are empowered only if their mothers are (246). O'Reilly also summarises different feminists' views on this issue and indicates that "a strong mother-daughter connection is what makes possible a strong female self" (*Matricentric Feminism* 22). Benefiting from these ideas, I will discuss the relationship between Leila and her mother in *The Final Passage* and Monica and her mother, Ruth, in *The Lost Child*.

As another concept introduced by Rich, *matrophobia* is a phenomenon I will discuss looking at Phillips's mother and daughter characters. Rich states that if the mother is not empowered, the daughter could feel disdained with this powerlessness, and they can generate *matrophobia*. She defines this term as "the fear not of one's mother or of motherhood but of *becoming one's mother*" (Rich 235; emphasis in the original). Rich indicates that the daughter needs to identify with her mother because she is also a woman and has the potential to be a mother one day. However, if this identification is not an empowering and wanted one, the daughter does not want to identify with her mother. Rather, she becomes afraid of becoming like her, and there emerges the state of *matrophobia*. As a result of this phenomenon, the possibly empowering connection between the mother and daughter becomes damaged, leading to the daughter's frustration. I find this term particularly useful to analyse the relationships of mother-daughters in the novels and explore their empowerment (im)possibilities.

Moreover, particularly in the analysis of Monica in *The Lost Child*, I will cautiously use Sara Ruddick's theorisation of *maternal practice* in her prominent book *Maternal Thinking*. According to Ruddick, a mother should meet three demands in maternal practice. These demands are *preservation, growth*, and *social acceptance.* She states that "these three demands . . . constitute maternal work" (Ruddick 17), so they should be met by "every" mother. The first demand *preservation* requires protecting the fragile and vulnerable child's life, Ruddick asserts. Because children are not physically capable, they need an adult's protection, which should be provided primarily by the mother. She highlights that preservation is also an epistemological entity (18) because the mother should see and know the "necessity of a care" for her children due to their "vulnerability" (18).

This physical protection later should be supported by intellectual and emotional support as in the second demand of *growth.* Ruddick asserts that children grow not only physically but also emotionally and intellectually. They generate new drives and desires. During these growths, they should be supported and encouraged because they generate coping mechanisms, "adaptive strategies and defences against anxiety, fear, shame, and guilt" (19). They need guidance and nurturance through these feelings and intellectual growth in their own peculiar way. The mother's job here is to recognise her child's emotional and intellectual growth and lead and support them in their growth.

In the third demand, *social acceptability*, however, the social group in which the mother and children belong is also a determiner. In order to fulfil this demand, mothers

should know what is acceptable and unacceptable in accordance with their social group, which might be quite variable. Accordingly, the mother should "train" her children for their acceptance in that society. Ruddick indicates, "The criteria of acceptability consist of the group values that a mother internalizes as well as the values of group members whom she feels she must please" (21). Thus, it seems that she highlights that the mother is transmitting the societal codes she is already submitting to and participating in to her child. This particular emphasis seems to be a significant point for this study.

Ruddick's contribution to voicing and demystifying mothers is undeniable and quite valuable. However, I will not simply employ her identification of maternal demands to analyse Monica, because the demands she identifies as maternal practice seem to align with the understandings of traditional and ideal motherhood at certain points. For example, Hirsch comments on Ruddick's *maternal thinking* concept as follows, "Although Ruddick speaks of both positive and negative aspects of maternal thinking, the 'maternal' tone she employs seems to disguise her expressions of ambivalence and to highlight her celebration of this *traditionally* feminine form of knowledge and relation (176; my emphasis). As Hirsch also indicates, Ruddick's theorisation has traditional implications. Therefore, her theorisation of three demands of maternal practice could carry some problems in itself. Furthermore, Ruddick underlines that her readings and theorisations are limited because they are based on "middle-class, white, Protestant, capitalist, patriarchal America" ("Maternal Thinking" 347). Nevertheless, it seems that this limitation might have been ignored by many as these demands seem to be the expectations of normative motherhood, even today. As a result, mothers could

be expected to meet these demands imposed on them on their own even when they cannot reach the necessary economic and social facilities and cannot meet their own "demands".

Moreover, these demands are also reminiscent of Hirsch's comment on the idealisation process of motherhood. She writes that the idealisation of motherhood coincided with the emergence of the concept of childhood during the industrialisation period. When the children started to be seen as vulnerable and dependant, "motherhood became an 'instinct,' a 'natural' role and form of human connection, as well as a practice" (Hirsch 14), and the concept started to be idealised. However, she indicates these idealisations were in the "interest" of the *child* rather than the *mother*. In the light of these analyses by Hirsch, I underscore that Ruddick's identification of maternal practice also seems to be focused more on the *child* rather than the *mothe*r. It concentrates more on meeting the children's demands by the mother. However, the mother's needs and conditions do not seem to be highlighted by Ruddick, and maybe they are even a bit neglected.

However, my intention here is definitely not to identify and criticise the normativity and the possible "lack" in the inclusivity of Ruddick's theorisation per se. In this study, I already focus on mother representations in literary texts, not mothers of real life. Thus, my focus here is to highlight the danger of the possible accusations that might be directed toward the Other mother characters, such as Monica, due to these identified traditional demands. Many mother characters (or mothers) cannot meet these demands because of the sociopolitical and economic inequalities they suffer from. Hence, I will

employ these demands of maternal practice identified by Ruddick because I will analyse to what extent Monica as a working-class literary mother of *The Lost Child*, "can" meet these demands and what the reasons are if she cannot meet them, as an Other mother.

Lastly, in order to analyse Phillips' voicing the mother in *The Lost Child*, I will use another term, *matrifocal narrative*, identified by O'Reilly. O'Reilly draws on Hirsch, Daly and Reddy in the formation of this term. As she also argues that in the literary or theoretical texts which embody maternal experiences, the mothers should be voiced and, in the narrative, there should be a shift from daughter-centric narrative to mother-centred. She claims that this is only achieved in *matrifocal narratives.* In these narratives, she indicates, "motherhood is thematically elaborated and valued, and is structurally central to the plot" (*Matricentric Feminism* 6). The experience of motherhood, thus, is presented from the maternal perspective through the narrative and the voice of the mother. She furthers that even though children are included in the plots of maternal texts, in *matrifocal narratives*, "the mother remains a central character, and her life remains an organizing theme" (126).

Elizabeth Podnieks also refers to the *matrifocal narrative* term by O'Reilly, and she states that such narratives "present women who grapple with patriarchal notions of idealized motherhood and who voice and 'unmask' their own counter-narratives" (180). In the book they edited together, O'Reilly and Podnieks argue that "if feminist theory is not the means to a resolution, matrifocal narratives may well be" (5). Therefore, it could be understood that *matrifocal narrative*s are aimed to be reached

in literary or theoretical texts to voice the mothers. Nevertheless, O'Reilly and Podnieks use this term by referring to the mother writers who can also voice the mother in their narratives "from silence to speech" (2). On the other hand, I use this term to refer to Phillips's narrating Monica's experiences in *The Lost Child* since he gives her voice as a mother and narrates her experiences form her maternal perspective. I also argue that Phillips can achieve the *matrifocal narrative* since he is one of those writers who are "from minority or marginalised communities and relationships" (Podnieks and O'Reilly 10).

I also find it important to note that matricentric feminism benefits from Adrienne Rich's distinction between *motherhood* and *mothering* in her book *Of Woman Born*. Rich identifies that whereas the former is a patriarchal institution that "is male dominated and controlled and is deeply oppressive to women", "mothering" is a female-centred and governed experience which carries the potential to empower women (Rich 13). Matricentric feminist theory, then, aims to carry the concept of motherhood from motherhood to mothering. Since it aspires to empower mothering experience and practices, it is understandable that it uses this distinction. Appreciating and supporting this doctrine, I, however, use the terms of motherhood and mothering interchangeably in this study so as to avoid any misuse or misconception. Thus, I would like to point it out particularly at this point in order not to lead to any misreading in the following of my study.

Looking both at the discussions in matricentric feminism and the literary studies focusing on mother characters, what might be seen as "lack" or maybe even

"essentialist", to a certain extent, is that they only focus on women writers' narratives and their depictions of mothers. This is quite appropriate and understandable since these maternal scholars believe that theirs is an act of underscoring the "women's contributions to male-centred literary histories" (Podnieks and O'Reilly 5). Nonetheless, I would like to show here how Caryl Phillips, as a male writer, contributes to these feminine forms of writing and disrupts those dominant, male-centred literary histories by "unmasking" motherhood with an acknowledgement and embracement of its plurality. Through his mother characters, he further calls the readers to question the norms of patriarchal motherhood and their disruptive results in the practice of motherhood identity.

I also base my aim in studying Phillips's novels on Podnieks and O'Reilly's claim. They indicate that "some of the most sustained and challenging matrifocal narratives are found in traditions involving writers and subjects from minority or marginalised communities and relationships" (10). Building on this argument, I underscore that Caryl Phillips is unquestionably one of those writers from a marginalised minority by which he is inspired in his writings. Hence, I find it pertinent to analyse Caryl Phillips's mother characters since he is one of those "who escaped colonization, and thus write on the very margins of Western discourse" (Podnieks and O'Reilly 10-11).

On the other hand, it might be thought that what matricentric feminism and Phillips do not concur is their ultimate aim of "empowering" mothers. Although Phillips acknowledges and embraces the plurality and backgrounds of motherhood(s), he does not seem to depict an image of a "powerful" mother because he mostly represents the

Other mothers and the challenging circumstances where motherings cannot be performed in an "expected" way. However, by doing so, he reveals the suppressing elements that thwart mothering experiences and practices, which are out of the control of these mother characters but more in the control of larger mechanisms such as imperialism and capitalism. This way, he "unmasks" motherhood. Therefore, such revelation is also quite valuable in terms of deconstructing the idealised and traditional motherhoods and bringing attention to the severely important but ignored facets of motherhood.

Matricentric feminism is undoubtedly a thorough and all-embracing theory which has already been its aim in its emergence. However, in order to deepen and expand my analyses of Phillips's mother characters, I will also draw on the readings of Black feminism such as Patricia Hill Collins, bell hooks, Marva L. Lewis and Karen T. Craddock, Camillia Cowling; Caribbean feminism such as Patricia Mohammed, Stephanie Mulot, Barbara Bush; and working-class motherhood readings from Patrice M. Buzzanell and Val Gillies. Besides these names, Andrea O'Reilly, as the foremother of matricentric scholarly studies, will indeed accompany my study and my analyses.

To conclude, in this chapter, I have summarised some significant contributors to understanding the literary representations of motherhood. Such a summary, I believe, has paved the way to see where I will position my analyses on Phillips's depictions in the overall frame of these representations. I have also explained the potentially pertinent theoretical tools and the theory of matricentric feminism, which is dedicated

to understanding the concept of motherhood and exposing its oppressive sources. I argue that this exposure is also what Phillips's fiction achieves since he offers various mother representations, and this is what I also aim for this study through my exploration of Phillips's mother characters. Based on these shared aims, I have claimed that the matricentric feminist theory is a fruitful approach to reading Phillips's fictional mothers.

Phillips, in his fiction, leads the way to comprehend the challenging conditions of mothers and question the idealisations of mothers, whether in literature or real life. Nevertheless, I do not aim here to appropriate the analyses of "real" motherhoods in "real" lives into its literary representations. Instead, my aim in this study is to explore the possible implications of Phillips's mother representations in his two novels. Clarifying my aim in this study and providing information about the theoretical tools I will employ, in the following chapters, I will move on with my thorough and intersectional analyses of literary mothers in Phillips's novels, first *The Final Passage* and then *The Lost Child* through a critical lens of matricentric feminism.

CHAPTER 3

THE FINAL PASSAGE: EMBRACING MOTHERHOOD(S) IN PLURALITY

. . .
Black Woman
Black
Female Head of Household
Black Matriarchal Matriarchy
Black Statistical
Lowlife Lowlevel Lowdown
Lowdown and up
to be Low-down
Black Statistical
. . . . . .
dry eyes on the
shy/dark/hidden/cryin Black
face
of the loneliness
. . . . . .
and no big
Black
burly
hand
be holdin yours
to have to hold onto
no
big Black burly hand
no nommo
no Black prince
come riding from the darkness
on a beautiful black horse
no bro
no daddy
. . . . . .
momma
help me
turn the face of history
to your face.

— June Jordan, “Getting Down to Get Over”

The main concern of this chapter is to analyse Caryl Phillips's debut novel *The Final Passage* and its plural representations of (Caribbean) motherhood. In his first novel, Phillips offers plural Caribbean motherhood representations which merit closer attention. Almost every female character in the novel is involved in the practice of motherhood. These motherhood practices however do not seem to concur with the appraised empowered Black or Caribbean motherhood representations. Instead, Phillips characterises his various Caribbean mothers in the challenging conditions of 1950s postcolonial Caribbean and England. Thus, this chapter explores how Phillips goes against the grain with his prominent mother figures in *The Final Passage* and how he "unmasks" motherhood.

The title of the novel, "The Final Passage", is seen as "ironic" by Paul Smethurst "as the novel returns to a point of continuous rupture" (9). However, this title could also be referring to the "Middle Passage", in which millions of enslaved Africans were forced to travel across the Atlantic since they were traded from Africa to the "New World" (the Americas) and Europe, which Paul Smethurst calls as "[t]he infamous triangle" (10). Despite having major hopes, the Windrush generation travels to England from the Caribbean as "low-cost labour". As a result, their journey might be reminiscent of the slave trade in which labour exploitation was again the main aim. In the novel, then, Leila and her family's journey is also one example of this generation's journeys, which could be the "final passage" if they cannot achieve turning back to their motherlands or to their origins. Moreover, the title preference and narrative of the novel also indicates its status as a neo-slave narrative. As an example of this narrative style, *The Final Passage* presents how post-slavery subjects struggle economically and

psychologically in their lands even after "independence". It also suggests how this new type of slavery continues in the eyes and practices of the Europeans. The immigrants, for instance, are (un)welcomed in the "Mother country" after the journeys they take similar to the Middle Passage.

As I stated earlier, Phillips incorporates autobiographical elements in *The Final Passage*. Being of the Windrush generation, Phillips's mother and father inspired him to write this novel, as the dedication states, "To My Mother and Father" (*TFP*). Phillips also comments upon this inspiration and writing the story of his parents in an interview:

> I was trying to give the story of a lot of people whose story hadn't been told by people of my generation. Lamming had told the story of the immigrants, Sam Selvon had told the story in *The Lonely Londoners*, so people of that generation had said what happened to them when they came over on the ship. But the kids, none of the kids had ever told the story of what happened to their parents? So I wanted to tell the story, if you like, from my generation's point of view. (Bishop and McLean)

In these words, it can be seen that Phillips aims to tell the untold history of his parents from his own perspective as the second generation. With this purpose, even in his first novel, he tells the stories of the unvoiced by giving space and voice to them. Therefore, in *The Final Passage*, there can be seen the traces of Phillips's parents as well as the other immigrants who decided to leave their homelands with hopes, particularly for their children. He also writes in his book *Color Me English* about his parents, "Nearly fifty years ago, on an English summer morning, they stepped ashore – my mother holding me in her arms, my father no doubt already scheming as to what mischief he might get up to" (305). These words are very reminder of his characters Leila and

Michael in this novel. That is, his source of inspiration for his characters is quite apparent in the novel.

Driven by these elements of the novel, many scholars have explored the novel particularly regarding its neo-slave narrative and the postcolonial elements it embodies. In this chapter, thus, I will first present an overview of the novel and some of these prominent studies which have explored, mostly, the postcolonial themes in the novel. Then, I will move on to explore the representations of plural mother figures of the novel by analysing them contextually. I will also discuss the father figures, at the end, as they mark significance by their absence and presence.

For my analyses, I will make use of matricentric feminist theory in order to analyse and understand plural motherhood experiences and representations in Phillips's novel. As I intend to offer an intersectional reading of the novel, the readings of Black and postcolonial feminism will also enrich my analysis. By these analyses, I argue that Caryl Phillips presents plural Caribbean motherhood experiences in *The Final Passage*. Although the Caribbean motherhood has often been praised for its empowerment due to the matrifocality of the islands, I assert that Phillips does not merely present such empowered Caribbean mothers in a matrifocal society. He, rather, places more emphasis on revealing the hidden aspects of the (Caribbean) motherhood by unmasking the underlying conditions that appear to make these multiple mothering practices challenging.

3.1. An Overview of the Novel

The Final Passage, Phillips's debut novel, is set in a small Caribbean island and England in the 1950s, and it offers an immigration story, inspired by Phillips's parents' experience. The novel, thus, employs the themes of immigration, unbelonging, the concepts of motherland and Mother country through the story of its protagonist Leila. It, thus, revolves mainly around Leila and her struggles in her motherland, where she never belongs in as a "mulatto" girl, and in Mother country England, where she finds it even harder to belong in as a "Black" woman. It also dwells on Leila's struggles in her relationships with her "unaffectionate" mother and "reckless" husband.

In the novel, after Leila's mother migrates to England for her treatment, Leila follows her. However, she also migrates to England from her small Caribbean island because there are no longer opportunities for good education or jobs there, and she hopes for a better future for her son and her family in England, as many others do on the Windrush ship. She also hopes to take care of her mother in England and develop a more intimate relationship with her. During her migration to England, she knows that "[t]he world she [is] choosing to inhabit might hold even less [interest] if she [can]not share it fully with her mother" (*TFP* ch. 4). Thus, after her mother's death in England, Leila concludes that England is a futile attempt to form a better future both for her and her family. In addition, she never has a "healthy" relationship with her husband Michael, who already has one more woman, Beverley, and a child in his life. Once he migrates to England with Leila, he entirely deserts his family there. As a result, however hopeful

Leila is before leaving her small island with all its struggles behind, she confronts further and even harder struggles with(out) her husband in England.

The feeling of unbelonging that Leila has always felt in her life deepens and becomes more wearing for her. After the migration, she starts having financial problems, so finds a job. However, she learns on the first day of the job that she is pregnant with her second child as a single Black mother in England. She cannot afford taking care of herself and her child while she is pregnant with another one. She lacks any support in her life; therefore, all her hopes for England seem to be crushed at the end of the novel. Due to all these struggles, through the end of the novel, she starts losing her grasp of reality. The novel, however, ends with an uncertain ending. It does not reveal whether Leila can stay in England with her son Calvin without any income or if she can return to her small island to find "satisfaction" with her communal life, which at least includes her supportive best friend Millie. In the end, the miserable situation of Leila having no food to eat or to feed her son, no wood to get warm, no job to earn money, and no one to support her with her two children, pregnant with one of them, could be the most disturbing and moving part of the work.

Leila has been presented as a quintessential example of how the locals of the Caribbean are "forced" economically to migrate to the "Mother country" and she is also representative of their restlessness both in their motherlands and in the "Mother country". Upon the restlessness that Leila experiences, Phillips states, "I understand what it means to have disorder in your life. I'm a migrant. I get it" (Ledent et al. 462). Having experienced such uneasiness in his life, Phillips can successfully reflect the

similar experiences of immigrants in his oeuvre. The novel, thus, is primarily addressed in terms of its treatment of postcolonial elements due to its setting in the Caribbean and England of the 1950s. Hence, I will here summarise some of the significant studies which have explored these prominent elements in the novel.

Paul Smethurst, in his study focusing on the concept of unbelonging in Phillips's work, describes unbelonging as "the condition felt by characters at odds with their environment" (5). Phillips, inspired by the works of both postmodern and Black writers, has successfully depicted the unbelonging of the Black, colonial or postcolonial subjects in his novels, Smethurst puts forward. He indicates that Phillips's inspiration from various "polyglot" writers has made him such a writer who is "[i]n the geopolitical and literary sense . . . dislocated, but well placed to orchestrate the polyphony and heteroglossia" (6). Appraising Phillips's polyphonic writing style, he argues that *The Final Passage* is the author's only novel in which unbelonging is given such overtly, including the marginalised, unbelonging, oppressed and "on the edge" characters.

Susanne Pichler, another scholar who explores the postcolonial elements in the novel, analyses Phillips's immigrant narratives. Pichler, similar to Smethurst, focuses on the themes of belongingness and estrangement of the immigrants in the novel. She argues that Phillips shows how the people of the Caribbean are forced to migrate as a consequence of the hopelessness and idleness created in Leila's homeland, which is a result of imperial practices. She highlights how Phillips's characters strive to develop a feeling of belonging in "Thatcherite Britain" (53), in which race and class

inequalities had deepened more. She also explores the dislocatedness and unbelonging of Leila in her homeland and in the "Mother Country". Hence, as Phillips himself underscores, Pichler draws attention to Phillips's aim of rewriting the history of the Caribbean immigrants in Britain. She then concludes her study with the claim that the novel shows that England is not home to these immigrants because "white British identity . . . is exposed as the underpinning of exclusionary and hegemonic practices on a national level" (59). As a consequence, she remarks, there emerges the questioning of "returning home" at the end of the novel.

Ensuing similar analyses with Pichler, Rezzan Kocaoner Silku summarises *The Final Passage* as "a classic narrative of displacement, alienation, frustration, and the search for a new identity" (164). Thus, according to Silku, Leila's restlessness in search for identity and belongingness is never-ending. Joining the discussions with a similar perspective, Yiğit Sümbül states, in such migration cases like Leila, it is impossible to generate a "hybrid" identity that Homi Bhabha offered as a possible third-space phenomenon for the immigrants. He adds that as Phillips's novels illustrate, during decolonisation period, it is unlikely to have coexistence and reconciliation between colonised and coloniser in the Mother country, which also faces frustration while hosting immigrants.

Considering these oft-studied themes of the novel, I remark that *The Final Passage* has been obviously a fruitful subject for postcolonial readings; nevertheless, it is still underexplored regarding its treatments of its female characters, albeit Phillips's appraisal for his "ability" to represent the female voice in his oeuvre. One prominent

study, which draws attention to the women characters in Phillips's novels, is by Shauna Morgan Kirlew. Kirlew focuses on black women's plural and "authentic" representations in Phillips's novels. She finds Phillip's depiction of black womanhood as "pro-womanist", by which she refers to the representation of black women in a progressive manner, and she argues that the novel is "against black antifeminist ideology" (51). She mainly discusses the subjugated yet assertive depictions of Leila and Millie and their connection as "sisters". Among the novels of Phillips that she treats in this study, she finds *The Final Passage* as "the most gender-progressive" one (69) because she asserts that Phillips represents the women characters with an equal voice of his men characters. She also highlights that the novel's employment of assertive women and powerful sisterhood foreground Phillips's progressive writing.

Kirlew also treats the maternal relations in the novel, focusing on Leila and her mother. However, her analysis needs to be carried further to explore other mother characters of the novel too. Even though it is a "fertile ground for [a feminist] academic study" (52), as Kirlew remarks, the novel has remained underinvestigated in terms of its treatment of gender issues. Kirlew's study is noteworthy since she employs black feminist readings and theorisation for her analyses. However, what might be lacking in her study is the impact of colonialism, which affects the lives of the women in the context of the novel.

All these studies have been enlightening in understanding and analysing Phillips's novel deeper particularly regarding's its racial and, to a certain extent, gender implications. However, I claim that *The Final Passage* should not have been read from

isolated perspectives such as gender or race only even though these aspects are quite valuable for its analysis. Yet, the novel is a quite rich work and it merits an even more thorough and intersectional reading considering its implications for race, class, gender and imperialism in their intersections. The novel is remarkable in terms of its employment of its female and mother characters, their relationships and their mothering practices, i.e. Leila, Leila's mother, Beverley and Millie's motherings, Leila and her mother's "distant" relationship, the understanding and the practices of sisterhood between Leila and Millie. Phillips's depictions of this Caribbean island with its men and women in the 1950s when it was a common trend to migrate to the Mother country, are also issues that need further analysis, which all are aimed to be explored in this study.

In the analyses of the relationship between the conditions and the experience of motherhood, I will draw on the creeds of *matricentric feminism* because it aims to empower mothering and embrace plural motherhoods by laying bare the factors that might make mothering a patriarchal and suppressing experience. Even though matricentric feminism is an inclusive framework, I will also benefit from the readings of Black and postcolonial feminism with an aim to further and enrich my analyses on the novel. Based on these analyses, I highlight that even though Phillips employs the same setting—a small Caribbean island—for these mother and father characters, the unequal conditions and individual differences determine plural and unconventional mother (and also father) figures in the novel. However, the depictions of mother figures have not always been empowered because of the conditions where they are to mother their children.

Driven by these arguments, in the rest of this chapter, I will first explore the plural Other mother characters, Leila, her mother, Beverley and Millie, of *The Final Passage* focusing on their conditions which influence their motherings through matricentric feminist critical lens. I will also analyse how a white surrogate mother is presented as an improbable (ad)option for a black daughter. Since this study has feminist implications by focusing on the analysis of mother representations, I will briefly focus on how the mother characters have been represented through their (non)sexuality. Lastly, I will move on with analysing the different relationships of the mothers and fathers with a focus on the father figures.

3.2. Plural Motherhoods

For Phillips, "literature is plurality in action; it embraces and celebrates a place of no truths, it relishes ambiguity, and it deeply respects the place where everybody has the right to be understood" (*Color Me English* 16). Phillips, thus, depicts his mother characters through this understanding of "plurality in action". Instead of presenting "bad" mothers to the readers, he focuses on revealing the mechanisms and ideologies regarding race, class and gender which influence the concept or the practice of motherhood, which might make it "dysfunctional". Therefore, I emphasise that Philips opens a space for understanding and sympathising with his mother characters. By doing so, he goes against mystified "strong", "resilient" (Lewis and Craddock 89), "matriarch" (Collins 176), and "superwomen" (Walker 405) Black mother figures in folklore or in literature. Instead, he lays bare the systems in which Black motherings are made "vulnerable". On the other hand, Phillips does not sanctify the plurality of

motherhoods; instead he foregrounds their existence, so embraces them. This way, he accomplishes his moral purpose in literature since he calls to question a normative concept, i.e. motherhood.

There are prominent and various mother characters in *The Final Passage*: Leila, her unnamed mother, Beverley and Millie. These characters "simultaneously succumb to and resist domination" (Kirlew 52), they are both "at once bold and submissive" (Kirlew 69), and they are both empowered and burdened as mothers with their wanted and unwanted children. Informed by this argument, I will focus on under what conditions these mother figures succumb to or resist and what makes them plural in their literary motherings.

In order to analyse these plural and unconventional mother figures, I will employ Andrea O'Reilly's identification of normative patriarchal motherhood. In particular, *normalisation, idealisation* and *depoliticalisation* are of vital importance here because Phillips problematises the traditional and normative motherhood in *The Final Passage* by going against these three normative terms presented by O'Reilly. First, Phillips debunks *normalisation* which assumes that mothering is peculiar to the nuclear family and the mother is the caregiver while the husband is the provider of the house (*Matricentric Feminism* 14). In the novel, though, there are not many examples of mothering in a nuclear family except one character, Millie. Rather, most characters are single mothers, and both nurturers and providers for their households. Phillips, therefore, depicts the "alternative" motherings which are, in fact, common but disregarded in societies. He does that by representing Caribbean mother figures which

have been thought as "dysfunctional" and "pathological" by the Eurocentric interpretations because these figures do not conform to the "norms" of European nuclear families. Phillips, however, shows how these families have "functioned" for centuries. On the other hand, he does not consecrate these single mother-headed-households, but presents the challenges that these single mother figures encounter perhaps because these single motherings have resulted from the enslavement practices in the Caribbean islands.

Phillips also criticises *idealisation* which "sets unattainable expectations of and for mother" (*Matricentric Feminism* 14) with all of his mother characters. In *The Final Passage*, he puts more weight on representing the "unideal" postcolonial conditions in which his mother characters perform mothering. Thus, he addresses the irrationality of expecting the "ideal" from the mothers who are not offered the ideal conditions and opportunities. In so doing, he also calls the reader to question what "ideal" motherhood is and whether there should exist such a conception. As to another normative assumption, according to my arguments in this study, Phillips constructs almost all his work on opposing *depoliticalisation* which supposes motherhood to be a "private and nonpolical undertaking, with no social or political import" (*Matricentric Feminism* 14). He characterises Leila in a 1950s postcolonial Caribbean island where there are no more opportunities for her and her son, and in inhospitable England as a single Black mother who hardly finds food to feed her family; Leila's mother as an "unaffectionate" one as a result of an unsolicited motherhood out of her intercourse with a "white" man; and Beverley as a single mother in the "absence" of her partner who migrates to the USA for economic reasons. This way, Phillips definitely

politicises motherhood and displays how the practices of motherhood have been, mostly negatively, influenced by economic and sociopolitical conditions in which motherings are expected to be "ideally performed". Through these negations, he also amplifies his belief that writing is a political act. Driven by these analyses, I will explore how Phillips negates these three normative ideological assumptions of motherhood in his novel with his plural Other mothers.

Before moving on with a more detailed analysis, I also would like to point out that it is significant to keep in mind that *The Final Passage* is a postcolonial novel. In the representations of Leila, Leila's mother, and Beverley, the difficulty of being a woman in a postcolonial land is quite foregrounded. In postcolonial feminism, women are considered *double colonised* in the (post)colonial lands both by patriarchal and colonial practices. By some postcolonial feminist scholars, such as Chandra Talpade Mohanty and bell hooks, the issue of "class" was also added in the discussions of the Third World women's subjugation, which *triples* these women's colonisation. Besides, O'Reilly claims that "mothers" are oppressed by patriarchy as women and mothers. Can I claim, then, that the mothers in the (post)colonial lands experience oppression even "quadruple" times? Thus, in considering this issue through the lens of a low-class postcolonial motherhood, the term *double colonisation* could be multiplied in more oppressed positions. Even further multiplication may be perpetuated through some more subjugating practices such as slavery. Therefore, an analysis of literary mothers in a postcolonial land is a zone that requires one to be "cautious". As bell hooks remarks, Black women's "transcending" their "tiredness" "may seem like a small gesture" in "the contemporary notions of good parenting", "yet

in many post-slavery black families, it was a gesture parents were often too weary, too beaten down to make" ("Homeplace" 84). Therefore, an analysis of mother figures in such circumstances should always be contextualised in order to grasp their possible implications.

Moreover, Andrea O'Reilly indicates in *Matricentric Feminism* that the concept of mother is different from the concept of woman (2). This is why the former should be considered separately from the latter as much as they should be interpreted in relation to each other. In Phillips's characters of *The Final Passage*, this distinction of their being mother and woman is quite explicit from time to time. Therefore, I sometimes analyse them separately as well as interrelatedly.

3.2.1 Leila and Beverley as Submissive Women but Powerful Mothers

Leila can be the most submissive woman but the bravest mother of the novel. Her "choice" of Michael as a husband to herself, even though she knows him "as both a destroyer and a partner" (*TFP* ch. 2), makes her almost "vulnerable" against the judgements. As a woman, Leila succumbs to Michael's "hegemonic masculinity", in Gramscian terms of hegemony. I claim that Leila consciously or unconsciously is giving her consent to be subordinated by Michael, and she accepts her "inferiority" and "exploitation" by Michael as "natural" (Weiler and Kenway 57). For example, in a scene in the novel, after waiting for Michael for hours to get married and him not showing up, Leila does not get angry with him. Rather her reaction after she finds him is given in these words of Leila saying, "Well, I found you anyway", and it is narrated, "She stood on her tiptoes, put her hands on his shoulders, and kissed him lightly on

the lips. It was not that he was that much taller than her, but she knew he liked it when she stretched to reach him" (*TFP* ch. 2). Here, it is seen that although it does not seem reasonable, Leila does whatever is pleasing to Michael. For Leila, to please Michael is much more important than the "value" given to her by him. Although she is not valued by him and also cheated on with another woman, Leila is always forgiving towards Michael. Even after he deserts Leila and their son in England, she imagines his turning back to them and being sorry for leaving.

Leila can never achieve being an "empowered" woman in the novel. For instance, when she thinks of getting married, she thinks that her role will be "more wife than daughter" (*TFP* ch. 2). Leila, therefore, never identifies herself with a sole "woman" identity. However, during her wedding ceremony, not getting along with her newly-wed husband, she questions her assigned roles and positioning as "[a] wife and a woman. A woman and a wife" (*TFP* ch. 2). For a moment, she cannot be sure of what should be the prior position for her. However, she then internalises the hegemonic masculinity in traditional marriages as can be seen in the following example: "She shut her teeth tight with frustration, knowing she would go out there and talk to her husband as if nothing had happened. That was the way it would have to be" (*TFP* ch. 2). In this scene, she acts upon the case along with the societal and conventional codes of marriage, and she thinks that she should "stomach" as a wife whatever her husband does.

On the other hand, Leila is a relatively empowered figure as a mother. Calvin, her son, becomes empowering and soothing in her life because "not only [is] he her son, he [is]

also her best friend" (*TFP* ch. 5) in their hardest times. As a relatively empowered mother, for instance, Leila decides to leave for England without consulting with her husband or anyone else because she is motivated by the hope that there awaits a better future for her son. Her reflection on leaving her small island for her son is narrated in these words: "Against the deep blue-black sky the African breadfruit trees towered, sunburnt in the daylight, charcoal-black at night, proud of their history. They were brought here to feed the slaves. They were still feeding them. They would not feed Calvin" (*TFP* ch. 1). Here, the trees "still" feeding the "slaves" in a postcolonised land is a direct indicator of neo-slave narrative. Leila believes that she should "save" her son from this ongoing slavery by migrating to England, where is, in fact, the main reason for these conditions of (neo)slavery. Nevertheless, this "independent" decision of hers is still a brave act for her.

Leila migrates to England for the sake of her son, and she endeavours to survive there again for him. She finds their house on her own, and she even finds a job to be able to take care of her son. Even though she is forgiving of Michael as a woman, she is more assertive towards him in her motherhood. The only fight they have with her husband is when Leila confronts Michael because he quits his job in England to build a "business". She becomes disappointed with this decision, and when Michael asks why she never supports him as the other wives do, Leila utters, "You have a wife who cares more about her child than pubs and drinking" (*TFP* ch. 4), criticising Michael's behaviour and his indifference towards their son Calvin. Hence, it could be observed here that Leila does not expect Michael to take care of her, but she expects him to do so for their son.

Despite Leila's apparent empowerment in motherhood, she strives in such circumstances that she feels overwhelmed with her position as a mother most of the time. Leila has a gruelling bond with her son Calvin, and this bond is described in the first chapter of the novel, where Leila is waiting alone for the ship to embark. In this scene, Leila waits for Michael for their journey to England while he gets drunk and falls asleep around a bar. While she waits, she becomes exhausted with her physical and psychological "burden". Therefore, another woman in the line offers help to Leila to carry Calvin by "liberat[ing] the child from his mother's arms" (*TFP* ch. 1). The word choice of "liberate" seems important here because, as in certain scenes in the novel, Phillips with this word choice may refer to a "relief" from the "burden" of motherhood Leila carries with her son. Here, since Leila needs help, leaving her child out of her arms for some moment is, in fact, "liberating" for her. Thus, a mother's "liberating" herself by "leaving" her child may not portray an "ideal" and normative image of motherhood, but it presents more of a "realistic" and empathetic image which Phillips seems to achieve. In doing so, Phillips here seems to deconstruct *idealisation* of motherhood.

The narrative in the rest of this scene is also significant. While "liberating" herself from her son, it is indicated that "Leila hesitated, then crouched, naked without child" (*TFP* ch. 1). It is noteworthy here that Leila feels "naked" without her child, whom she often "traps", "soothes", and "warms" between her breasts and whom she finds soothing and calming for herself with his existence. It could be understood from these repetitive lines that, as Black feminism asserts (even though mostly in positive terms),

Black mothers find subjectivity and generate a self-identity through their motherings (*Matricentric Feminism* 37; Collins 176), which at times is more empowering than their identity of womanhood as in the case of Leila. For instance, in African-American culture, rather than marriage, motherhood has been regarded as a passage from girlhood to womanhood (*Matricentric Feminism* 40), which means it assigns an identity and sense of self to the women. Leila's motherhood is also evocative of this case. However, what is also important here is that her motherhood identity has been more burdening than empowering, which once again moves her away from the "ideal".

In the same scene, Leila's discomfort continues after her liberation from her son, and her thoughts are expressed in these lines: "She watched as the woman hugged her son too close and rocked him too violently, but she avoided Calvin's abandoned stare. She was happy to be *relieved* of his *weight*, if only for a few minutes, and she closed her eyes" (*TFP* ch. 1; my emphasis). In these lines, again, the liberation of Leila from her son is emphasised as "relieving" for her. Phillips here debunks the idealised, all-sacrificing, always comfortable and super-strong archetypal mother norms through this image. He acknowledges and presents in his narrative that motherhood could also be overwhelming for the mothers from time to time. Nonetheless, it is seen that Leila still feels overly responsible for her son and critiques the women's behaviour with her son seeing everything she does as "too" much. Her gruelling responsibility is also observed in the following scene when she wakes up and "[feels] guilty for leaving Calvin with her for so long" (*TFP* ch. 1).

Leila's "burden" of motherhood is perpetuated in her second pregnancy because the mechanisms of inequality, i.e. race, gender, and class, and her loneliness that make her motherhood overwhelming are more dominant in England during her second pregnancy. Leila learns about her pregnancy when she starts to work to feed herself and her son in England. Although Leila is stigmatised as the "mulatto" girl in her small island because she is from a white father, she feels more ostracised as a Black woman after she migrates to England. She cannot find a proper job, after her clerical job in her island, and she hardly finds a derelict house. After Leila cannot continue working because of her pregnancy, she starts not being able to feed her son. Moreover, it is also noticeable that her second pregnancy is not planned or wanted, as in the case with almost all the pregnancies in the novel, because, as observed by Walker on Black mothers, some Black women mostly "enter loveless marriages, without joy . . . and become mothers of children, without fulfillment" (Walker 402). Since the unequal conditions and discriminative environment make her mothering more challenging, Phillips shows that motherhood cannot be considered as a separate entity unaffected by politics, disproving *depoliticalisation*. Rather in cases like Leila, that is, working-class immigrant or Black mothers, sociopolitical conditions have direct results on motherhood.

Leila learns about her second pregnancy when she faints due to improper eating, which indicates her difficulty in feeding both herself and her son. With the pregnancy, she is supposed to rest and wait for her second unplanned child, which seems like a "luxury" in Leila's case in her "quadrable" colonised circumstances in England as a working-class mother. Thus, Leila does not feel joyed about her pregnancy, and her feelings

about it are remarked in these words: “The thought of being pregnant again filled Leila with something, though it was neither fear nor happiness. Resignation was the word she had come most often to use, for any question of disposing of the child was, of course, out of the question” (*TFP* ch. 5). The word choice of “resignation” here again is noteworthy. Resignation is, in fact, a word that may summarise the so-far-short life of Leila because she does not have any “agency” or self-dependence in her certain acts, especially in her relationship with Michael. Her pregnancies are also as a result of this resignation. Therefore, resigned again under her circumstances in England, she feels “heav[ier]” with Calvin and “the baby she carrie[s] in her body” (TFP ch. 5). Her not being able to think of “disposing of the child” could also be understandable because the novel’s setting is in 1950s Britain, while the legalisation of abortion in Great Britain was in 1967 (Palko 61), which does not offer Leila an option. Leila’s desperate situation with her child and pregnancy once again problematises *idealisation* of motherhood. Undoubtedly, no such mothers (Black, young, single and poor) have been considered while normalising and idealising the concept of motherhood. However, Phillips presents here that these Other mothers also exist and they, like the others, should not be expected to meet such “ideals” in their terribly demanding conditions.

As another mother, Beverley, Michael’s mistress, with whom he has a son named Ivor, is represented quite similarly to Leila. She is also more submissive as a woman than she is as a mother. However, the narrative does not give much space to Beverley as a “woman”, she is mostly represented with her motherhood. She is the provider of her house because, as many people of those lands do, her husband leaves for America, and

he never sends any money for her. In her husband's absence, she has a child with Michael, who has solely been present in her house as someone who eats her food and partners with her sexually. Beverley earns her living by "selling fruit" in the market or "sewing some garment". As a single mother, she does not expect much from life "except a clean house, her child's health and her breath in her body every morning when she [wakes]" (*TFP* ch. 2). This kind of representation of Beverley is reminiscent of the poet Jean Toomer's description of Black women who are "creatures so abused and mutilated in body, so dimmed and confused by pain, that they considered themselves unworthy even of hope" (qtd in Walker 401). She is one of these Black women without hoping much for neither herself nor her future.

On the other hand, Beverley is mostly depicted in the narrative while nurturing her son Ivor, i.e. bathing, feeding, changing, and putting him to sleep. According to Stephanie Mulot's definition of matrifocal household, I can remark that Beverley is represented as a matrifocal figure. Mulot describes matrifocality in these words, "[a]s soon as the presence of a man at the head of the family was no longer an economic necessity, the household immediately became feminine, maternal, and non-conjugal, and therefore matrifocal" (166). Hence, Beverley and her self-dependency by earning her own money and living with her son on their own could be a reference to this matrifocal household. The representation of Beverley as such a mother is against the assumption of *normalisation* because it disregards that motherhood can/should be performed only in a nuclear family household. However, it can be seen that Beverley, as a matrifocal figure, can mother her child. Remembering O'Reilly's words in Caribbean motherhood, I highlight that similar to these Caribbean mothers Beverley is "the

backbone of the family and [she] often combine[s] dual roles of primary parent and income earner" (*Encyclopedia* 171). Moreover, she not only manages her household but also looks after Michael, and she even buys him a motorbike, which he wanted, as a present. However, on this bike, Michael shows off around town and goes to "pick up his future wife" Leila (*TFP* ch. 1). Nevertheless, Beverley's depiction in the novel is still disempowered and muted.

As another issue, the contradictory depiction of Beverley's house is also worthy of attention here. In contrast with her nurturing character as a mother, Beverley's house is a "barren" one. In her house, "[t]here [are] no pictures on the walls, not even one of Jesus, only old calendars. And nothing [grows] in this home, not even a flower" (*TFP* ch. 1). This representation of a mother's house is once again debunking, and it contradicts the matrifocal narratives in which the Black mother is empowered as a nurturer and provider (*Matricentric Feminism* 40). It also contrasts with Alice Walker's famous mother, who was "the woman who literally covered the holes in [their] walls with sunflowers" and who "adorned with flowers whatever shabby house [they] were forced to live in" (Walker 408). Additionally, it is at odds with bell hook's argument which indicates that Black mothers' houses are "the places in which everything that is truly important in life takes place: warmth, comfort, nourishment of the body, and nourishment of the soul" (77).

What might be different with Beverley's house is that unlike these empowered and revolutionary mothers, Beverley does not have any hope or desire for a change or "improvement". As I indicated earlier, she already does not expect much from life.

This lack of hope might be perhaps because of the "barrenness" of the island she lives in. It is where there are no jobs except sugar cane plantation and almost all its residents desire to leave for England or the USA for "better" life conditions. It is an island left "idle" and "barren" after colonialism and plantation. Since there is no hope in the island for its residents, it also seems there is no hope or desire for Beverley to change and improve when her husband has already left them and migrated to the USA. Maier writes about this hopelessness pervading in the island:

> They [the residents of the island] are still subjects of the British Empire who have not been allowed to break free and to progress. The islanders' main occupation is still cane-cutting, the same for which slaves had been brought from Africa by the white colonizers of the Caribbean. Those who want to improve their life standard, to earn more or to take a degree are forced to migrate. (128)

It can also be understood from these lines that the mothers of these islands cannot set their hopes on their island in order to build their own gardens. The island still struggles with the impact of colonialism and plantation, so it is in its post and even neo-colonial period. Thus, Beverley's house also seems to be a representative of the conditions of her island. As Akujobi highlighted earlier, although Mother Africa seems to be liberated, the mothers of Africa are still subjugated under the unequal conditions and lack of sources (3).

I underscore, therefore, that although the narratives of hooks and Walker highlight the Black mother power, Phillips's narrative focuses more on the challenging conditions in which these Black mothers have to mother. He shows that these mothers were not always able to create these beautiful gardens of their own in these lands that were left "infertile" after centuries of conquers, plantations and exploitations. Therefore, a home that has been a "site of resistance" (hooks, "Homeplace" 76) for some Black women

does not have to be the same site for all Black mothers. Phillips once more presents that even though there could be the communities of matrifocality in which Black mothers share a common ground, there is always the plurality of the mothering as well as womanhood everywhere, sometimes resistant, sometimes not.

As for the difference in Leila's and Beverley's identities as women and mothers, there seems to be a significant issue to point out there. As women in Michael's life, Beverley knows about Leila and Leila also knows about her. They both know that when Michael is not with one of them, he is with the other, and that is an "acceptable" case for both. For instance, Phillips comments on this triangle of Leila, Beverley, and Michael in an interview in these words:

> In the Caribbean context that's not a big deal. I wouldn't criticise him [Michael] at all for that. There's a certain honesty to island societies where the place is so small everybody knows what's going on—but nobody wants to know. In a society like that, if you're going to have a mistress, or another woman, there's no point trying to be clandestine about it. Leila knew; she still married him. Beverly knew about Leila; she still had Michael back. (Jaggi 178)

It is significant here that this triangle does not happen to be a problem for the women, as Phillips states, because these polygamies have been a "reality" of Caribbean society. This image of Michael as a polygamous man with two women in his life, therefore, accentuates the partnership and fathering practices in the Caribbean which have been a legacy of slavery.

On the other hand, even though Beverley can bear the existence of another woman, what she cannot endure is the existence of another child. In the scene where Michael brings Calvin to meet him with Beverley, she slaps Michael, perhaps for the first time,

uttering, “[t]ake the child out of my house” (*TFP* ch. 1). It can be understood here that in Beverley’s life, the presence of another child is more resentful than the presence of another woman. Therefore, her self-identity through motherhood is more significant and perhaps more meaningful in her life than her identity of womanhood. Leila’s and Beverley’s self-dependency as mothers and their uprisings only through the agency of motherhood identity are outstanding and could be an indicator of the matrifocal power Phillips also represents—though to a certain extent—in his novel.

3.2.2. Leila’s Mother and Unwanted Motherhood

Leila's mother, who does not have a name and not much space in the narrative of the novel, is another significant mother figure. It is noteworthy that Leila is a child of her Black mother and a white man, and how Leila is conceived is not entirely clear in the novel. It might be perhaps as a result of rape by a white man, as Kirlew suggests (71). However, the narrative presents Leila's mother's sexual experiences as well as her negative perspective on having a child. Sexually assaulted by a fifty years older man than herself when she was just a child and granted 10 cents after every intercourse to buy “ice cream” for herself, Leila's mother finds “no fascination” in “the coupling of man and woman” (*TFP* ch. 3). Once she experiences such a beginning in her sexual life, she always feels “used” after her more intimate experiences and “[s]he [feels] as though her lovers were playing; that they gained their real satisfaction elsewhere” (*TFP* ch. 3). This representation of the mother's sexuality is an indication of some Black women's lack of self-esteem in their sexual intercourses by internalising the commodification of their bodies as a part of “sexual slavery” and feeling “inferior”

through their gender and skin colour “in the prison of patriarchy” and racism (hooks, “Talking Sex” 86).

Her relationship with the white men in her life also depicts such an image as if she was “conquered” and exploited by the white master in the same way their “motherland” had been conquered and exploited for centuries. To illustrate, her taking financial help from three white men, who might be the father, in order to raise Leila is narrated in these words: “[T]hese white men eyed their daughter from afar and happily paid the money safe in the knowledge that they had a real relationship with the island that would live on after they left” (*TFP* ch. 3). The desire of the conqueror, the coloniser, to leave his trace behind on the colonised land is seen here. These traces could sometimes be damages left to the exploited colonised land, its economy, and society, or their children left with their mothers along with these mothers' (ab)used bodies. What then Phillips presents here to the readers could be the fact that the relationship between Leila and her mother is intervened by colonial and patriarchal powers. Therefore, what should be questioned here is not whether Leila's mother is a “good” or “bad” mother but how the oppressing powers have disrupted her performativity of motherhood. Therefore, drawing on Simone Alexander’s argument on Caribbean mother-daughter relationships, I emphasise that in Leila and her mother's relationship, “the inability to bond on the mother's and daughter's parts is not of their own making, but is mediated and prohibited by outside force: colonial intervention and indoctrination” (79).

The relationship between a mother and daughter has been acknowledged to be an indicator of the empowerment, self-esteem and self-identity of a daughter. Analysing the works of different feminist writers, Andrea O'Reilly infers that "a strong mother-daughter connection is what makes possible a strong female self" (*Matricentric Feminism* 22). However, while Adrienne Rich confirms the significance of this connection, she also highlights that if the mother is empowered, then the daughter is empowered (246). Marci Weskott, for example, by reviewing Nancy Chodorow's psychoanalytic work on mothers and daughters, indicates, "the daughter does not simply identify with a mother who is like her and, thus, obtains a relational sense of self; rather, she identifies with a mother who is weak and powerless and thus develops a sense of self deficient in power and authority" (qtd in *Matricentric Feminism* 35). Based on these analyses of the mother-daughter relationship, it can be seen that Leila's mother cannot be such an empowering figure for her daughter because of the patriarchal, colonial, and economic disruptions in their relationship. Even though she tries to impart certain teachings to her daughter, she cannot empower her because she does not possess the necessary empowerment. As a result, Leila also cannot stand as an "empowered" mother figure as she identifies herself with her disempowered mother. However, Leila does not experience *matrophobia*, the phobia of the daughter to resemble her mother in her mothering. As opposed to Monica, which will be analysed in the next chapter, Leila does not escape from her mother. Instead she wants to be closer to her and get to know her although she fails to do so. Perhaps this could be because the lack of identity and a father, and unbelonging to a motherland or a Mother country Leila experiences as a "mulatto" girl since her birth.

Furthermore, I believe that both Leila and her mother are not emotionally detached from their children, despite the fact that they do not have an intimate relationship. In this regard, I disagree with Kirlew's argument in which she claims, “Leila is physically attached yet emotionally detached from her infant” (71). I, instead, claim that they take their “relative” power from their children. Whereas Calvin is not only Leila's son but also her “best friend”, Leila is her mother's “constant and only companion” (*TFP* ch. 3). It is also clearly stated that “her mother loved her she [Leila] did not doubt” (*TFP* ch. 3). Yet, throughout the novel, Leila waits for something her mother is incapable of showing: love and affection. “[A]s always, Leila wished there was something more, something that would make her mother more like a friend” and “nothing seemed to be able to bring them together” (*TFP* ch. 3). Although her mother loves her, she is unable to show it in the way Leila expects to see it. It may be because it is something that her mother herself has never seen, which makes it harder for them to build an empowering unison. Hence, the intimacy Leila’s mother fails to build with her daughter, indeed, results also in Leila’s inability to show her affection towards her son Calvin, which might lead the way for the arguments of “emotional detachment”.

The narrative further presents that the lack of intimacy could be “expected” in the motherhood experience of Leila's mother. It is narrated that her mother never actually wanted a child. “In fact she had never wanted a man, for when she saw her first penis hanging with arrogance before her” (*TFP* ch. 3) after the sexual harassment she experienced. Her pregnancy with Leila is also defined quite negatively in the narrative:

> as the final man sliced into her body, a young man of almost her own age, she was overcome with the horror of the fact that in less than six months' time her

> first child, not his child, a child that belonged to all of them and none of them, would be breaking its way out of her body. (*TFP* ch. 3)

In these words, it could be understood that Leila has been an unwanted child, and such depiction of pregnancy and motherhood is definitely debunking its normative and conventional expectations. Here, the use of an "indefinite" pronoun "them" leaves an open door for analysis. It might refer to the fact that Leila's mother has been abused by many men and so, Leila is the child of "them". However, I propose instead that "they" here may refer to the white coloniser patriarch who have exploited Black women in addition to their land. Hence, Leila's description of being "a child belonged to all of them and none of them" is again reminiscent of Leila's being a colonial "product" of her mother's exploited body who "was broken and forced to bear children" (Walker 403).

These word choices of Phillips here is also reminiscent of Patricia Mohammed's allusion of the Caribbean to a child. She indicates that "The Caribbean is not just one lost child, but the children of many parents, who have made similar but different passages across the ocean" (11). The similarity of the discourse in these two different works, fictional and non-fictional, is uncanny. Thus, I underscore that Leila's birth as a result of an "exploitation" is similar to the exploitation of the Caribbean islands under colonialism. Both of them are the children of "them", i.e. the white colonisers. That is, they are the offsprings of several passages across the ocean extending into their mother(land)'s bodies. As a result, here Phillips seems to establish a connection between motherhood and the political context of his novel's setting. This way, he again

deconstructs *depoliticalisation* by overtly politicising the identity and practice of motherhood and unmasking its another facet.

Nonetheless, Leila's mother's attachment to Leila is still seen when she cannot sleep the night before she sends her daughter to school for the first time, aiming to decide whether she should walk her to school or send her alone. When Leila does not want to go to school, her mother beats her until she goes. This act of Leila's mother might be seen as "violent", but it is necessary to analyse this act in its context. Lewis and Craddock indicate:

> [V]iolence might be seen as necessary protective parenting practices to ensure the survival of their children. Evidence from research on racial socialisation by Black mothers link these protective parenting practices to positive social-emotional outcomes for Black children. (90)

Through this statement of the use of violence by the Black mothers, Leila's mother's act could be more relatable and understandable, and it even shows her care and affection for her daughter since education is quite significant for Leila as a Black girl because it may provide upward class mobility for her. Leila's mother perhaps envisions this fact and aims to direct her only daughter to education.

As the daughter, Leila constantly seeks her mother's approval, and in every act, she is anxious about her mother's opinion on it. When she wants to marry Michael, she asks for her mother's approval first. However, though her mother disapproves of it, Leila marries him. Therefore, she becomes afraid to disappoint her mother with her "unhealthy" marriage and tries to tolerate it. To illustrate, after Leila decides to go to England, she thinks that Michael should come with her as the father of their child, but

she thinks if their marriage fails there, "[n]obody would blame her. Her mother would see that for herself" (*TFP* ch. 2). On the journey to England, she again realises that "her marriage [is] again to be tolerated, not shared"; however, "Leila prefer[s] this to conflict, fearful that her mother might think her a failure if they [are] to separate yet again" (*TFP* ch. 4). These statements are significant for this study because it is seen in these lines how a daughter shapes her choices, self-value, and identity as a result of her relationship with her mother.

Phillips, as appraised, achieves to generate sympathy and understanding for his mother figures by disclosing the underlying oppressive elements in their motherings. However, what Phillips's narrative lacks in this novel is the absence of mother's name, voice, and narrative in the novel. The narrative's focal character is Leila; however, it only embodies Leila's narrative as the daughter in their relationship with her mother. Even though Leila is the focal character, the narrative does not also directly convey her story as a mother, as in the case of Monica in *The Lost Child*. On the other hand, Leila's mother neither has a voice nor a name. She is not recognised in the narrative. Her feelings, thoughts and struggles in her mothering are not focalised either.

On this point, I would like to remind Daly and Reddy's argumentation where they assert, "We most often hear daughters' voices in both literary and theoretical texts *about* mothers, mothering, and motherhood, [not *from* mothers]" (my emphasis *Narrating Mothers* 1) and they also add a significant point remarking, "[i]f we read only as daughters, we may fail to hear what mothers are trying to say" (11). Drawing from this argument, *The Final Passage*, I argue, is a daughter-centred narrative telling

its story from the perspective of Leila. That is, it does not achieve the *matrifocal voice/narrative*, in which the experience of motherhood is voiced in the mother's own perspective. It does not thus assign a space for the mother to tell her story. Upon the voice of the mother in narrative, Marianne Hirsch also writes, the mother's "representation is controlled by her object status, but her discourse, when it is voiced, moves her from object to subject" (12). Therefore, it seems that Phillips represents her mother characters in the *object* status in *The Final Passage.* With its extradiegetic narrative, *The Final Passage* does not achieve to have a *matrifocal* v*oice*, albeit its embracement of the plurality of motherhood(s).

3.2.3. The Impossibility of a Surrogate Mother(land)

The Final Passage also circles around the lack of identity and wholeness that Leila seeks as an individual because she can be nurtured by neither her mother nor her motherland in these terms. She, therefore, suffers from both "lack of a [caring] mother" and "lack of a [welcoming] nation" (Yıldız 606). The mother is seen as a bridge between a child and the motherland in national identity creation. Hence, the link between mother and motherland has been highlighted in literary studies because this link is thought to "[open] us new venues for understanding the intersections of traumatic national and personal histories" (Yıldız 606).

This bridge, however, has not been a binder in Leila's case because she cannot learn about her roots through her mother. Although Leila questions her mother about her unknown white father, she cannot find any proper answers to make sense of her

identity. Therefore, she already comes from the "unknown", and she only knows she is an "Other" in her motherland because she is seen as a "superior arse", the "white" or "mulatto girl" (*TFP* ch. 4, ch. 2). Because she also cannot build an "intimate" relationship with her mother, she experiences an identity crisis. Her crisis of not knowing her mother or her roots is given, "she barely knew her mother, that everything up until now had been a preparation for knowing, not the knowing itself. Her mother was almost a stranger, and even after four months in England, Leila had never given up hope that she might still get to know her" (*TFP* ch. 3). This never being able to know her mother turns Leila's search for an identity into a struggling and vain act. Moreover, she loses her mother without knowing her. Thus, with her mother's death, Leila's identity crisis deepens, and any chance of a link for a national identity she can create through her mother dies with her. As Bénédicte Ledent indicates, "[t]he death of Leila's mother . . . can be equated with the loss of homeland" (*Caryl Phillips* 25).

Therefore, this double lack Leila experiences results from both a national and personal trauma. Therefore, the novel offers that this national trauma of the Black or the personal lack of Leila cannot be overcome by a "white" surrogate mother or the coloniser "Mother country". For instance, when Leila moves to England and tries to build a life, she is accompanied at first by a white neighbour, Mary. She acts, in fact, as a surrogate mother to Leila. She gives Leila advice, is worried about her and her son, and gets furious with Michael for not acting responsibly towards his family. They chat, have tea and shop together, and in their relationship, Leila becomes "like a daughter to a mother" (*TFP* ch. 4). Mary also acts as a grandmother to Calvin, caring about him and "talk[ing] of buying Calvin some gloves and a scarf" (*TFP* ch. 5).

However, their skin colour hinders Leila from accepting Mary as a surrogate mother to herself.

Leila's rejection of a white surrogate mother presents the impossibility of an amalgamation between the white and Black under the conditions of the post-war England when the traces of imperialism were still prevailing. As Smethurst asserts, the two cultures of the white and the Black "meet, but a line is drawn under the meeting" (12). Although Mary is the care and affection Leila has been seeking, because she is white, she cannot become a surrogate mother for Leila. Instead, it is stated in the novel that "Leila [is], without even realising it, making an enemy in her mind of the only real friend she had in England" (*TFP* ch. 5). In her mind, Leila unconsciously links Mary to the blonde woman whose hair Leila found on her husband's clothes. This linking is narrated in these words: "Then she imagined Michael's woman, then a young Mary, and she tried to make the two of them mix into one, but Mary was not blonde, and Leila's unconscious desire to unravel her friend from such a fate held true" (*TFP* ch. 5). Therefore, albeit unconsciously, Leila assumes Mary to be another blonde woman that her mother warns against. By presenting a white surrogate mother to a "mulatto"/Black daughter and showing the impossibility of such a connection, Phillips again politicises motherhood and highlight how this experience is deeply affected by the political status quo where it is performed.

The prejudice and hatred that Leila carries against whites, particularly white women, stems from her mother's teachings. Once Leila is a teenager, she encounters a white couple on the beach sunbathing, and she goes and sunbathes with them. However,

when her mother sees this interaction, she punishes her by making “her shower in the street, under the rusty stand-pipe, naked and fourteen” (*TFP* ch. 3). Then she warns her daughter by uttering, “[w]hite women never sleep with both eyes closed if a coloured woman is around, and they never see a coloured man without something moving inside of them. Still, you going live to find that out” (*TFP* ch. 3). Before this incident, in her childhood, Leila encounters a white woman who smiles and talks to her; however, Leila asks the woman, “Are you a witch?” (*TFP* ch. 5). This mystifying and demonising of the white is, in fact, similar to the European perspectives on Black women. In these scenes, it is apparent that the trauma of the Black by the white is ongoing in the postcolonial lands. As can be seen, antagonising is reciprocal between the white and Black.

In the light of these judgements, I underline that it is not possible for Leila to internalise the surrogate of a white mother. This rejection of a white surrogate mother is also similar to Leila's rejection of the “Mother country”, which already rejects her in the first place. Leila's mother again warns Leila when Leila moves to England and tells her, “London is not my home . . . And I don't want you to forget that either” (*TFP* ch. 3). Through this reminder, it becomes evident that Leila will not be able to regard England as “home” to herself, which is not perplexing because England has already been unwelcoming enough, being “as cruel as the heartless stepmother in fairy tales” for the immigrants (Sarvan and Marhama 36). *The Final Passage*, then, overtly presents how England as the Mother country does not treat all her children equally.

Simone Alexander considers the mother as “the principal component of” the relationship between mother, motherlands and Mother country and remarks that the mother should provide a balanced “trichotomy” for her daughter. He also asserts that “[o]ften, acceptance of the daughter by the mother leads to the daughter's acceptance and adoption of the motherland. Hence, the daughter's relationship with her mother predetermines her relationships with the motherland and, to a lesser extent, with the Mother country” (18). Drawing on Alexander's argument, I claim then that the inability of Leila to belong anywhere, neither to her motherland nor to the Mother country, may also result from her distant and ambiguous relationship with her mother. Thus, Leila’s mother does not stand only as a mother figure, but she also alludes to the motherland of Leila and her lack of connection to both.

What Leila seeks in England then could also be analysed through Alexander's argument, which claims:

> The absence, literal or figurative, of a mother sends a daughter in search of another mother(land). This desperate quest for ‘wholeness’ and home space forces and forges an imaginary re-creation of home, giving one a false sense and a false hope of the self. (25)

Hence, Leila's looking for a “home” and “wholeness” as a daughter in her motherland and England only gives her false hope, which she realises after losing her mother. In the end, she cannot form belonging anywhere, especially in England. Moreover, although she feels otherwise for some time, she cannot accept the surrogate of a white mother. Thus, in his novel, Phillips also depicts the significant role of a mother in the formation of self, belonging, and national identity, particularly for daughters. By doing so, he goes against *depoliticalisation* and *idealisation.* He demonstrates how mother-

daughter practice can be influenced by social and political surroundings and also shows how such literary Other mothers, who already struggle enough as a woman in a land with rather exploited history, cannot be expected to meet any ideal conceptions of motherhood.

3.2.4. Sexuality of the Black (M)Other

It is necessary to explore the representations of sexuality of the Black m/other by Phillips as well because this study employs a matricentric feminist perspective. Because the novel's setting is a Caribbean island, which is considered a "matrifocal" society, there could be a tendency to think that women of these islands are sexually liberated. However, this is not the case and the novel does not portray such an image through its female characters. Instead, gender inequality and sexual double standards are overtly depicted in the novel and these are particularly obvious in the relationships between Michael and the women in his life.

The double standards of the islands could be observed particularly in Michael's approach towards Beverley. Despite Michael having two women in his life who know about each other, when Beverley receives a letter from her husband, Michael "[becomes] increasingly angry, for in her eyes, in every line of her face he could see the full confession of her servility" (*TFP* ch. 2). Michael, who has two children from two different women in his life, expects Beverley, who had already been married before Michael, not to keep in touch with her husband. This is once again reminiscent of Mohammed's analysis on the Caribbean islands on which women are not allowed to have polygamous relations while men are tolerated in this regard (26).

Mulot, also, in her analysis of matrifocal societies, indicates that even if women are empowered in their domestic space as mothers with their financial freedom, in the public sphere, patriarchy is still dominant (176). She also remarks:

> Condemned to being either respectable, or seen as "sluts"—that is, either as saintly mothers or as bad mothers—it is extremely hard for women to adopt publicly, to desire privately, or to live fully a more liberated sexuality, or even so much as a conjugal relationship that is less tightly bound up with the duties of motherhood. (174)

It is seen in Mulot's analysis that mothers are closely observed and easily judged by the society; therefore, it is almost impossible (and also unreasonable) for the mothers to meet such a society's expectations in their positions. Considering Mulot's analysis of women's sexual (un)liberation in matrifocal societies, I remark that the characterisation of Leila and Beverley are quite representative of the women in such society. Beverley, when she gets a letter from her husband, immediately turns into a "slut" in the eyes of Michael. Additionally, Leila, in particular, is presented through her undesire for sexuality among her representations of "motherly" duties. In other words, these characters are presented more prominently with their motherly characteristics than their (suppressed) sexualities.

Leila, for instance, starts to touch herself for the first time after Arthur, her former lover, stops to touch her. However, this touch is not a pleasurable or wanted one because when Arthur leaves her body untouched, she feels that as if her body "would [be] best remain unexplored" (*TFP* ch. 5), and this is when Leila starts to disdain her body. She feels like her body does not belong to her. Even though she touches herself, she does not feel any pleasure out of it and "[s]he gr[ows] to hate her body for this

assault on itself" (*TFP* ch. 5), "assault" here referring to Arthur's not going any further with her. Leila here depicts how she internalises the cultural codes of women's sexuality of her island. She shows how she sees herself from the perspective of a male gaze since she despises her body because Arthur does not go further with her.

Leila's sexual relationship with Michael is quite similar to the one he has with Beverley. These women's sexuality is presented passively in the narrative. For instance, Leila's "first night as a married woman passe[s] by without incident" (*TFP* ch. 2) with Michael's spending that night at Beverley's. Even after a short time in their marriage, Michael "no longer bother[s] to force himself upon her. It [is] as if she were a tunnel he was tired of passing through" (*TFP* ch. 5). Michael's sexual affiliations to his partners are presented with his boredom as if these women were mere objects he uses and discards once bored. This objectification is depicted even in a more dramatic way when Leila gets pregnant. It is narrated that "when Leila's pregnancy reached its middle stages, and her swollen shape no longer held any mystery, [Michael] started to spend nearly all his time with Beverley" (*TFP* ch. 5). In these lines, it is seen that the body of the mother is unwanted and it is undesirable by men. Michael comes and goes between these mothers' bodies as he pleases. The despised body of the Black woman, therefore, has been subjugated even more in her Black motherhood.

Similar to Leila's, Beverley's body is represented as "a game [Michael] was tired of playing" when he "followed her with his eyes, knowing that he would simply make love to her, then walk back across the village the way he had come" (*TFP* ch. 2). In these lines, Michael's male gaze is overtly depicted while belittling Beverley's

sexuality and objectifying her body. The relationship between Beverley and Michael is already an "economic-sexual exchange" according to Mulot's description of some of the men-women relationships in the islands (168). From this exchange, it seems only Michael is benefiting by exploiting Beverley financially and sexually. Thus, as Maier asserts Michael acts like a coloniser (131), exploiting not only the capital but also the bodies of the women in his life commodifying and (ab)using them according to his own benefits.

Despite these sexually subjugated representations of the Black m/others, Phillips breaks the "silence" on Black women's sexuality. Molly Thompson argues that "unless the silence is interrupted and broken more frequently in all types of representations (literary or otherwise), Black women's sexuality will always be misperceived and misinterpreted" (qtd in Marshall 81). Thus, Phillips could be considered to be breaking this silence in his work by his mother characters' (suppressed) sexuality. Moreover, I also underscore that by representing the repressed and despised sexuality of Black mothers here, Phillips calls the readers to question the conventionally "hypersexualised" representations of Black female. He also shows, through Michael's characterisation, how the body of the Black woman/mother along with her sexuality has been gazed and subjugated by the patriarchal male gaze.

3.3. Absent/Present Plural Fatherhoods

Building on the argument that "fathering is a feminist issue" (Silverstein 3), I also explore the positionings and representations of father characters in Phillips's *The Final*

Passage. Such an analysis, I believe, holds the potential to understand literary mothers' place and gender (in)equality representations in Black literature, particularly through the relational positionings of mother and father characters. Driven by that purpose, in this part, I analyse the representations of Michael and Bradeth as the fathers of *The Final Passage*.

In African-American and Caribbean literature, "absent" father figures have been recurring themes along with the single-mother-household representations. Phillips, however, represents both absent and present fathers, and he shows in his depictions that there could be both examples residing next to each other in the same lands and cultures. Therefore, I argue that, in so doing, Phillips debunks the stereotypical representations of "the absent" father, and he represents plural fathering experiences through Michael and Bradeth, in the way he does with his mother characters.

Michael and Bradeth are depicted as foil characters. While Michael represents a hegemonic male, irresponsible and absent father figure, Bradeth is his opposite by caring for his wife and taking the responsibility of his family. Phillips indicates in an interview that "[f]or every Michael there's a Bradeth, a terrifically responsible person" (Jaggi 178). However, it would be dangerous and essentialist to claim that Michael is a "bad" father for being absent, Bradeth, on the other hand, is a "good" father for being present in his duties. Rather, it could be pertinent to explore the phenomenon of "absent" fathers and Phillip's purpose in his representations. Based on this exploration, I indicate that Phillips again demonstrates how the economic background and personal trauma determine the absence or presence of father. Thus, it is first significant to

provide the necessary background information for the phenomenon of this "absent" fatherhood before analysing the fatherhoods of Michael and Bradeth.

The phenomenon of absent fathers has been acknowledged as well as challenged by certain scholars (Reynolds 17; Coles and Green 3). However, as Roberta Coles and Charles Green indicate in their study, exploring the myth of the absent father, "this stereotype did not arise from thin air" (1). For example, in her study, Reynolds indicates that a high number of households in Britain "are lone mother households" in which fathers do not reside with their partners or children. Caryl Phillips himself also acknowledges the case and remarks in an interview that "[i]n the immigrant experience in Britain, the father was often pretty absent from the home. There are so many broken families in the black community in general, not just in the migrant community" (Davidson 95); therefore, these broken families have been a signature theme of Phillips's writing.

What is more significant is that "[s]imilar high rates and patterns of lone-mother/female-headed households have existed for even longer among black, specifically lower-working-class, families in the Caribbean region" (Reynolds15). Phillips seems to depict these lone mother households in the depictions of Leila's mother, Leila, and Beverley's households. In the novel, there also exists a representation of the "lower-class" father's absence through Michael, by not being able to find a proper job or a regular income either in the Caribbean or in England. In contrast, there is also a present father figure, Bradeth, in the novel, providing for his house and supporting his partner and child. Thus, analysing the cases in real life,

Reynolds indicates that there have been present fathers of the Caribbean as well, and these fathers have been aware of the negative stereotyping directed towards them, and they do not accept these accusations (18).

The case with this "absent" father myth shows similarity to the case of Black mothers since Caribbean fathers also felt that they were labelled as "bad fathers" because they were judged vis-à-vis the white fathers of European nuclear families (Reynolds 18). It is in that regard a prerequisite to look at the emergence of this phenomenon. As I have explained it in matrifocal society notion, "[s]lavery is still an explanation for current understandings of black fatherhood and families because female-headed household patterns and fathers' roles within the family emerged during this period and are still very much in evidence today" (Reynolds 16-17). Therefore, it is widely claimed that the absence of the father in the African-originated families is a result of slavery.

Caryl Phillips also comments on the impact of slavery on emergence of these "absent" fathers and remarks:

> There is a very commonly held theory that one of the reasons there is such a preponderance of single mothers is because of slavery, an institution which greatly disrupted the black family. There is an idea that if you take away a man's responsibility for his children, which is what happened in slavery when the man was replaced by the master as head of the family, it does something to the psyche of the man of African origin. It induces an irresponsibility. (Davidson 95)

Here, Phillips explains how the institution of slavery has deranged the African fathers and families, and he also seems to offer the contextual background in his characterisation of Michael. Therefore, this explanation could once again indicate a need for contextual analysis of his novels. He writes the history of the suppressed from

their own perspectives as an opposition to the oppression, essentialisation and categorisations the suppressed had to face. Hence, it seems inappropriate to accuse Michael as an individual father within the post-slavery Caribbean context. Phillips himself also suggests:

> It's not morally commendable, but I wouldn't sit in London and say he's a bad guy. Michael's behaviour there would have been unquestioned. Nobody would have to say, what the ruck are you doing, having two women with two kids. The nature of those 'outside women' and 'outside children' would be acceptable. (Jaggi 178)

Thus, in these words, he emphasises the danger of an ethnocentric analysis of the setting of his oeuvre, and here again, the background stimulation from the Caribbean for Phillips's character creation is underscored.

Even though Michael cannot be accused individually as the father, he is still represented not as a favourable father figure. Rather, he is seen in the novel through his clumsiness while holding his children like "a bunch of bananas at the market place" and "awkwardly", and touching them "half-heartedly" (*TFP* ch. 2). Nevertheless, he is depicted much more unfavourably as a "man". For instance, Michael's giving "Phensic", a painkiller, to the women he has intercourse with and telling them it is a "contraceptive pill" (*TFP* ch. 2) is the very revelation of Michael's character as a man. When Bradeth judges him for this act, Michael utters, "[i]f it make them feel better then nothing wrong with giving them a pill of some kind" (*TFP* ch. 2). Hence, I underline that although his psyche could be pathologized as a result of enslavement, this kind of a perspective of his towards women reproduces the system and perpetuates enslaving women. His similar disrespectful perspective towards women is also seen when he talks to Bradeth about how he will teach his son not to marry any women

because “why a man should buy cow if he can get milk free?” (*TFP* ch. 2). Seeing women as “cows” giving “free milk” to men, which means satisfying men sexually without any conjugal bonding, Michael is subjugating women by objectifying them once again. Moreover, as he does not have an income and a house for himself, he goes back and forth among the houses of his grandmother, Leila and Beverley living off of these women. Thus, Ledent defines this lifestyle of Michael as a “parasitic existence” (*Caryl Phillips* 23). As a result, in Phillips’s representation, Michael could be regarded more as a “bad” and selfish “man” than as a “bad” father figure.

Nevertheless, what Phillips does in his narrative again is encouraging sympathy in the readers for his character Michael, as well. For that purpose, even though he is not a focal character, the narrative embodies the story of Michael. In his story, his parents die during their trip to America, which they probably take for a better future for their son, as in many families in the Caribbean. This loss of him already depicts a tragic image of the neocolonial period in the islands. When his parents die, he starts to live with his grandparents. His circumstances as a child living with his grandparents are narrated in these lines:

> He had no qualifications. Being thirteen when his grandfather had died he had little choice but to leave school. The few pennies he could scratch selling country fruit in the town or, when the time came, weeding the fields, had made more sense to his grandmother than money spent on his books and uniform. (*TFP* ch. 2)

Through these words, the economic and psychological hardships that Michael struggles with as a lower-class boy in a postcolonial land, which continues in his manhood, are given here, and these lines might carry the purpose of arousing understanding and empathy in the readers.

Bradeth, as the foil of Michael, is represented in a more "present" image with his manners towards his own family and the women in Michael's life. He first becomes furious with Michael's manners at his wedding. When Michael does not care about Leila during their wedding, Bradeth says, "Look, man, why you not go see to your wife? . . . I sure she going appreciate a bit of affection on she wedding day" (*TFP* ch. 2). Here, Bradeth seems to understand Leila's need for Michael and Michael's "duty" in his own wedding, and he does not hesitate to warn his best friend.

However, Bradeth's support is more significantly seen in Leila's birth when Michael stays with Beverley because Leila's "swollen shape no longer held any mystery" for him (*TFP* ch. 2). How Bradeth is of service during Leila's labour is given in these lines:

> Bradeth stood in his closely guarded shadow, having shown no emotion throughout the whole process. He had not been present when his own daughter was born, for Shere's had been a premature birth. When it became clear that Leila was almost certain to give birth this evening he did not return to the capital as he had planned. He followed Millie's instructions, borrowed a bicycle and cycled into Sandy Bay for the nurse. Then he had cycled back up the road with her as furiously as he could. (*TFP* ch. 2)

Here, Bradeth is quite present, not as a father but as a man with all the facilities he can provide for the women. He, in a sense, willingly fills the gap of Michael in all his "absence". The narrator also highlights that he was not able to be "present" at her daughter's birth, and now he seems to compensate for his absence and relieves his guilt with the help he provides for Leila's birth.

Moreover, when Michael does not come to see his new-born son Calvin, whom he sees after six weeks of his birth, Bradeth goes to Beverley's to talk to Michael. When he arrives and sees that Michael is careless in his manners, Bradeth's rage is outstanding, which is narrated as such: "In his mind Bradeth saw the newborn child's face. He saw Leila's pain, and he forced himself to look at Beverley holding on to her son in the corner, seemingly unaware of what was going on. He looked back at Michael and for a moment he felt he wanted to punch him" (*TFP* ch. 2). Bradeth also feels "ashamed" to look at Beverley because Michael forces Bradeth to give the news of his new-born child from Leila in front of Beverley. In understanding and caring for the women and children, it is seen Bradeth differs from Michael. He cares more about Leila and Beverley and their children than Michael does.

Bradeth also tries to protect Leila, and he continues threatening Michael uttering, "[e]ither you go round there and be a husband for she or I telling you not to bother to go see she at all, for I won't stand by and see you treating her to all this coming and going and coming and going shit . . . I going break every bone in your damn body if you don't start treating she right. Every last bone" (*TFP* ch. 2). Here, Bradeth's threatening Michael stands as a courageous move of Bradeth because he is presented less "masculine" in the narrative as a kind of "wimp", especially in front of his wife Millie. These lines are also quite significant because the words of Bradeth are worthy for Michael as they have a close relationship as "brothers". As a result, Bradeth's words and manner create a significant impact on Michael since he later turns back to Leila to live together.

As a "father" in his relationship with his daughter and wife, Bradeth is more of a dutiful kind. He plays with his daughter, and when he leaves the house, "[h]e kisse[s] his daughter . . . Then he presse[s] his lips against Millie's forehead" (*TFP* ch. 2). This kind of depiction of him is reminiscent of the "present" Caribbean fathers that Reynolds explores in her study who "are actively involved in fathering and child care duties" (24). However, unlike Michael, Bradeth owns his own business, and he takes care of his family as the "provider". His financial situation is much better than Michael's. He also would like to get married and rebuild Millie's aunt's shop, which will be another income for their family, and it provides the chance to stay on the island rather than being forced to migrate. Even though this could not be the only explanation for different depictions of these two fathers, it is also important to note that, as Reynolds indicates, middle-class fathers had been more "present" emotionally and financially in bringing up their children than the lower working-class fathers (24).

As a result, through Michael's and Bradeth's representations as men and as fathers, Phillips demonstrates that there is no stereotypical "one" type of "absent" Caribbean father. However, there are "absent" ones as well as "present" ones and the economic, sociopolitical, and individual factors could be a determining element in fathering experiences in the same way they affect mothering practices.

To conclude, in this chapter, I have explored the plural motherhood representations of Caryl Phillips's *The Final Passage*. Analysing Leila, her mother, Beverley and Millie, I have argued that Phillips shows how unique the experience of motherhood is and how motherhood(s) cannot be interpreted through universal and normative

conceptions of motherhood. In so doing, I have remarked that, Phillips debunks the three normative patriarchal assumptions of motherhood, i.e. *normalisation*, *idealisation* and *depoliticalisation*, which are identified by Andrea O'Reilly. Through Leila, her mother and Beverley, Phillips shows how "idealization" of motherhood excludes the experiences of Other mothers, because these "ideals" are determined by "dominant" discourses of gender and motherhood.

In order to unveil the conditions, which influence the mothering experience of these literary mothers, I have focused on the economic and sociopolitical conditions where Leila, her mother and Beverley practice their motherings. Therefore, I have emphasised that while Leila, Leila's mother and Beverley try to mother their children in the most possible ways, they are thwarted by their conditions, i.e. economic difficulties, postcolonial conditions, traumatised postcolonial land and subjects, forced migrations, loneliness, and stigmatisation, from mothering their children "powerfully". Through Millie, Phillips presents another possible type of mothering and he shows that there could be empowered mother figures in the same postcolonial land. However, I believe, what Phillips aims to underscore through Millie is that although there could be empowered motherings in the same lands, the shared conditions which make other motherhood(s) vulnerable in those lands should also be considered, and these mothers should not be overlooked.

I have also analysed the plural father figures of the novel, as I believe Phillips's employment of these father figures has amplified his aim to foreground the Other motherings and the underlying reasons for their oppressions. Overall, according to my

reading of the novel, by unveiling the compelling conditions in which mothering is performed, Phillips deconstructs the traditional and universal understandings of motherhood and he also paves the way for the readers to question these conceptions. Thus, he also shows that there could, in fact, be more plural and unique experiences of motherhood rather than a universal and single concept.

Following my arguments on Phillips's mother representations in *The Final Passage*, in the next chapter, I will explore similar as well as different literary mothers by Phillips in another novel *The Lost Child*. My analysis of the mother characters in the next novel will contribute to as well as support my arguments for the mothers in *The Final Passage* since *The Lost Child* also offers plural and various Other mother examples for this thesis.

CHAPTER 4

THE LOST CHILD: MOTHERHOOD(S) IN THE MOST CHALLENGING CONDITIONS

> This third kind of "bad mother"-sometimes also on the socioeconomic periphery-is one whose children seem to have lost their way.
>
> — Andrea O'Reilly, "'Bad' Mothers", *Encyclopedia of Motherhood*

This chapter focuses on the "dysfunctional" motherhood representations in Caryl Phillips's *The Lost Child*, which is one of his latest novels, published in 2015. This novel is particularly significant since Phillips, in this novel too, maintains his representations of plural motherhood(s) by contextualising them in more diverse contexts, including an emancipated slave mother in 18th century Liverpool and a white English mother in a working-class neighbourhood in Leeds, North England in the 1960s. Through this contextualisation and characterisation, Phillips continues to unveil the disrupting and disturbing elements that affect the experience of his characters' mothering.

In writing this novel, Phillips is inspired by his own childhood experiences in the 1960s in Leeds, as the second generation after his migrant Caribbean parents. Being the only Black boy in his school in Leeds, sent to a summer camp for the disadvantaged

children, and exposed to the news of the Moors murders in the 1960s, he was motivated to write the story of these disadvantaged, outcast and ignored children along with their mothers, who are also outcasts themselves. In that regard, the title "The Lost Child" is not only a reference to Tommy, Monica's son who gets lost in the moors in the novel, but also to "the lost, silenced, and invisible children of Empire whose presence (or absence) haunts the pages of British fiction" (Ledent and O'Callaghan 230). Hence, after thirty years in his writing—since his first novel *The Final Passage*—it is clear that Phillips continues to tell the stories of the silenced and outcasts.

In this chapter, therefore, I analyse how Phillips employs the stories of these silenced and outcast mothers along with their lost children in this second novel. With that aim in mind, I will first offer an overview of the novel and the studies which so far have explored the novel from different perspectives in order to position my study among these scholarly studies and to present its possible contribution to the existing literature. Later, I will continue analysing the mother figures in their contexts, which are significant in terms of these contexts' impacts on the motherings of these characters. I will also explore the representations of the children of these outcast mothers because they and their narratives also bear significance in terms of their stigmatisation in society as a result of their birth from these mothers. Moreover, I highlight that fathering is a considerable issue in (un)upbringing of these single-mothered children, and fathers play an essential role in their partnership with the mothers in parenting. Thus, I will finally focus on the father characters in the novel.

In my analyses of the mother characters in *The Lost Child*, I will employ matricentric feminism and also two terms—*maternal practice* and *matrophobia*—identified by the maternal scholars, Sara Ruddick and Adrienne Rich respectively, who contributed in shaping the doctrines of matricentric feminism. Based on my analyses, I argue, in this chapter, that Phillips employs various "dysfunctional" mother characters in *The Lost Child*, the former slave mother and Monica, in order to expose the veiled social, economic and political conditions that influence these characters' mothering(s). I claim, in so doing, Phillips counters the idealised and normative motherhood conceptions and he also encourages the readers to question these norms.

4.1. An Overview of the Novel

In its multiplicity, *The Lost Child* embodies three different storylines. First, it opens up with the story of a former nameless slave mother who is perished with her son on the streets of 18th century Liverpool, begging to be able to earn money and feed themselves. She often recalls the traumas and sexual assaults she experienced in the Middle Passage journeys, which she has embarked on three times already. After emancipation from slavery, she conceives a child from a white gentleman, who is later known in the novel as Mr Earnshaw, the gentleman of *Wuthering Heights* (1847) by Emily Brontë. Although he is willing to help financially to support his child and his extramarital partner, she is unwilling to take continuous help from him. As a proud woman, she prefers to work for herself and her son. However, when she gets pregnant and gives birth to her child, the doors of work start to close, and she cannot continue working. When her white polite gentleman starts absenting his care and himself from

the woman and the child, she has to start prostitution to be able to continue their life. Then, it results in her loss of grasp of reality and known as the "Crazy woman" (*TLC* ch. 1) because she does not "fit in" the norms of society, which are already the reason of her "falling".

In the second and main narrative, the readers are presented with the story of a young white woman, Monica, in Oxford and Leeds in the 1960s. She rebels against her family, especially her father, and decides to get married to a man from an "exotic" place, the Caribbean. Monica's story is narrated from her birth to death; however, it is not a bildungsroman. Instead, it appears to be a reverse bildungsroman which has "gone wrong", and it is more "about non-development and unrealised potential" (Agathocleous). Monica is presented as an isolated "misfit" in society and/or among her peers. Her isolation, particularly, peaks in her university years. At first, Monica's acceptance to the University of Oxford is not expected because she does not belong to the university's dominant upper-class society. She also does not have any familial ties at this university to refer to in order to get in. Although she gets accepted to it with her talents, she never achieves to fit in its societal codes. Thus, from the very beginning, she stands there as an outcast until she feels belonging with other outcasts in the Overseas Student Association. In this association, she meets her husband Julius, a Black graduate student in history from an island in the Caribbean, with whom Monica falls in love and marries.

Monica later quits Oxford and follows her husband's dreams. However, she cannot find a place for herself in her husband's dreams and their love does not last long. After giving birth to two children, Ben and Tommy, she happens to desert her husband

because she cannot join him in his goal to move to his country and participate in its declaration of independence from the Empire. The most striking stories and scenes then start with her being a single working-class mother who has not graduated from university, to which she cannot go back because of her financial situation. Not being able to meet her children's needs financially, she leaves them to foster families who mostly fail at fostering. The loss of her children, i.e., Tommy to death, Ben to a foster family, and her severe marginalisation by society result in her hospitalisation in asylums and her suicide at the end of the novel.

The in-between story narrates Emily Brontë on her sickbed and her household accompanying her. Emily's loneliness and her father's dissatisfaction with her, because of her not being a son to him, are prominent themes in this story. This part integrates sections and scenes from *Wuthering Heights* as well as parts from Brontë's letters and diary entries. Thus, it recreates the deathbed of Emily Brontë and presents her as another "lost" soul. Hence, this narrative also is an indicator of the astonishingly multi-layered narrative of Phillips in this novel. Since Phillips is more interested in the character of Heathcliff of *Wuthering Heights*, he focuses, in this narrative, on the creation and motivation behind this characterisation by Brontë. In the story, her repeated imagination for an unknown boy coming from the moors signifies the complex intertextuality Phillips successfully achieves in the novel because these moors are also where Tommy gets lost and found dead in the main narrative, and where Heathcliff, the boy of the former slave mother, passes through with his father, Mr Earnshaw, while going to his new "home".

The Lost Child mainly employs the themes of loneliness, unbelonging, abuse, stigmatisation and outcasting. As a signature element of Phillips's writing, "disturbance" could be the most aroused feeling from the novel, which means Phillips again achieves his purpose in his writing by representing the bitter and ignored reality through its disturbance. The narrative includes multiple stories and multivocal voices, embodying various focalisations. The multiplicity, disruptions and unconventionality in the narrative seem to be a representative of the disruptions in the Other's lives, resulting from the colonial and societal codes. About the implications of the narrative in his writing, Phillips remarks:

> I'm not looking for "once upon a time," and a narrative line from A to B. I'm always looking at how that chronological line is going to be disrupted. Because if you grow up in a society that didn't include you—didn't see you—you don't trust anything. And you certainly don't trust those stories that didn't include you. (Agathocleous)

In his words, it is seen that he is, in a sense, employing postmodernist writing in order to deconstruct the conventional writing style. However, what he aims more with his narrative is to deconstruct the conventional and linear (hi)story writing of the oppressor, the coloniser, and/or the European. He goes against not only the British—so, Western—canon, but also its writing conventions by making room for the Other's narratives.

Due to the themes it employs, the studies on *The Lost Child* mainly focus on its intertextual and narrative qualities, employment of loneliness, and the race and class inequalities it represents. Bénédicte Ledent and Evelyn O'Callaghan, for example, in their study particularly explore the intertextuality between Phillips's novel *The Lost Child* with his another novel *Cambridge*, Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* and Jean

Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea*. They analyse the themes of loss and connection through disconnected family representations in these novels and draw attention to the postcolonial elements that *The Lost Child* embodies in its dialogue with the other three novels. Ledent and O'Callaghan, thus, claim that Phillips's novel is a "writ[ing] back to the English literary canon in which *Wuthering Heights* has an established place", and "the subtext of colonial dominance and its consequences is played out in the early and more contemporary sections of *The Lost Child* in the stories of damaged characters" (235). Therefore, they again highlight Phillips's aim to "write back" to the Empire or the English canon as a "Black" writer, so rewriting the Eurocentric canon and history from the perspective of the ignored.

What is also remarkable in their study, which is significant for this study, is their statement on the novel as being "invested in literary parenthood" (231). That is, Phillips, in this novel, writes about the unvoiced history of the orphaned, the ignored, and the lost children of the Empire and Phillips does that by building bridges between the narratives of his and different canonical novels, they claim. This argument also resonates in Stephen Clignman's study on the novel, he writes that in the novel there are numerous "'lost children' including Monica, Tommy, Ben, Emily Brontë, Branwell, Heathcliff . . . Even the parents in the novel are lost children of a kind: Heathcliff's mother, Monica's father, Patrick Brontë" ("Writing the biofictive" 357). Through those, Clingman highlights that Phillips assembles the excluded stories which are "silenced through biopolitical history" (357). This is significant because I also aim to present the consequences of colonialism, which are mentioned here, represented in Phillips's novel through the mother characters and their children. These studies are

valuable because they read the familial (dis)connections and Phillip's implications on the impossibility of reconnections in the lives of those oppressed by colonialism. Nevertheless, they have not provided a close reading of the women characters and mothers who are at the centre of Phillip's stories.

Another remarkable study on *The Lost Child* that deserves attention here is Marta Frątczak-Dąbrowska's article, which explores the novel in terms of its postcolonial and class representations. Frątczak-Dąbrowska summarises *The Lost Child* as "a multi-layered text with a clear didactic message conveyed through a vision of the world deprived of social solidarity and ridden with racial and class prejudice, in which poverty is stigmatised as a (moral) flaw" (6). Frątczak-Dąbrowska claims that even though the novel, on the surface, deals with the colonial conditions, its underlying message is the socio-economic oppression starting with colonialism and continuing in the form of (global) capitalism (8). In this regard, she especially explores Monica and finds society and its oppressing hegemonic class system, which leaves Monica more isolated and vulnerable, responsible for Monica's fall. Thus, her study is particularly significant here because it underscores the underlying implications for the characters' suffering in the novel, focusing on the economic status, which could be a stimulator for this study in analysing the circumstances of the "dysfunctional" motherings in the novel.

As seen, the studies given so far have not employed a particular critical lens to explore the women and/or mother characters in the novel that is under study here. Sarah Brophy, however, reads *The Lost Child* as resistance against patriarchal and

institutionalised organisations; thus, she explores the novel by the lens of a critical affect theory blended with Black feminism analysing specifically the female protagonists of the novel. She argues that the novel "revisits the exclusions and suffering caused by patriarchal and (neo)colonial violence" (161). Brophy, too, pursues the arguments of previous studies, and she emphasises that by voicing the unvoiced and depicting "crimes, scandals, and suffering of the postwar period differently" (161), *The Lost Child* "disturb[s] the inheritances of liberal historiography" (162).

Brophy also indicates that Phillips aims to draw attention to the economic struggles of mother characters and their children. Thus, she claims that the powers of patriarchy and colonialism alienate the female characters. She indicates that both the former slave mother and Monica in their "single mother-led households" are

> rendered out of place by the lovers, landlords, employers, and other agents of purported beneficence who govern their lives, and they finally die alone, unattended, their children cast out, profoundly vulnerable to the very authority figures who claim to offer protection. (164)

Therefore, she highlights that although it seems there are institutions or people for the protection of these "vulnerable" women, these institutions "wield the power of life and death over delegitimised and disenfranchised women and their children" (165). Even though by these points, Brophy's article is valuable regarding her reading of the conditions of the female characters, her study does not explicitly focus on the intertwined mechanisms of oppression imposed on these characters' motherings.

Informed by these valuable studies and driven by their arguments on *The Lost Child,* I analyse the novel's employment of a particular concept, i.e., motherhood. Although these studies have focused on the various form-related and thematic issues included in the novel, i.e., its intertextuality, narrative qualities, its purpose to voice the Other, and contextualising the socio-economic conditions in which the women characters suffer, none of the studies particularly explores Phillips's mother characters. Giovanna Buonanno indicates that the "absence of fathers" is a "signature of [Phillips's] work" (99). What draws my attention, at this point, is the fact that while the "absence of father" is seen as a "signature" of Phillips, there is still not enough reference to his valuable characterisation of mothers.

Since I have argued that Phillips's empathetic voicing and plural representations of motherhood are valuable, in the following part, I will continue to explore his mother figures in this novel using matricentric feminism as a critical framework. I will particularly analyse how Phillips employs socially, economically, and politically disadvantaged conditions as the setting where these mothers are expected to mother. I will also discuss how these conditions influence the performativity of motherhood of his characters. Based on these discussions, I, thus, claim that Phillips deconstructs the "ideal" or "universal" understandings of motherhood while unmasking and giving voice to the silenced Other mothers. I further claim that he calls the readers to question these norms by presenting the "marginalised", and/or "dysfunctional" mothering experiences in his novel.

4.2. The "Dysfunctional" Mothers of *The Lost Child*

Phillips maintains his aim of "the plurality in action" (*Color Me English* 16) in *The Lost Child.* Similar to his purpose in *The Final Passage,* though positioning his mother figures in more various contexts this time, Phillips unmasks motherhood through multiple Other mothers in this novel as well. Before analysing the mothers individually, I would like to point out Phillips's presentation of different Other mothers and their stories together in this novel. As Tanya Agathocleous indicates "the novel miraculously enables the radically different worlds it delineates to make sense of each other, and explores the tragedies of history through the pain and pathologies of its central characters" (Agathocleous). How and why Phillips presents these seemingly "radically different worlds" in the same novel and how he traces these tragedies in his narrative are important.

The novel at first glance seems to present unrelated and independent stories of a former slave mother in the eighteenth-century Liverpool and a white working-class mother Monica in the twentieth-century of northern England, Leeds. It, however, does not present such "simple" but a much more complicated structure. Phillips remarks in an interview, "I wanted my readers to do a bit of work—I always want them to do a bit of work—but it seemed only appropriate that my novel shouldn't have a straightforward, easily accessible narrative structure". He continues, "If you're trying to reclaim a history . . . it doesn't move in a straight line" (Agathocleous). Here, he again emphasises his aim in rewriting and reclaiming the history of the ignored and oppressed "who are missing from, or only shadowy figures within, official records"

(Ledent and O'Callaghan 231). Therefore, there seems to be a deeper aim behind the intertextuality of these stories. They share a common ground, and this ground seems to be the haunting imperialism prevailing in all of them.

For instance, the slavery trajectory and the darkness of the former slave mother and his "lost" son in the eighteenth century seem to haunt the "lost" soul of Brontë a century later in her sickbed with the darkness of a boy coming from the dark moors, leading her to characterise a Heathcliff in his novels. This could be interpreted by Ledent and O'Callaghan's argument. As they indicate, *The Lost Child* shows how Caribbean diaspora fiction haunts the British canon, which have left out, ignored and silenced the former (230). This haunting then prevails in another "lost" child, Monica's narrative, and it is haunting her and her mixed-race child Tommy in the twentieth century when he is bullied due to his race, in the end gets assaulted and "lost" in the dark moors, the same moors which haunt Brontë a century earlier. Ledent and O'Callaghan declare, "the simultaneous experience of reading one character and remembering reading another underscores the contemporary consequences of ignoring such connections and perpetrating persecution of the outsider" (245). In a similar tone, Kaisa Ilmomen argues, the novel presents "the uneven encounters between the Global South and the Global North: the children of the British Empire are still affected by these encounters" (208-209). Thus, in the novel it is seen how Phillips represents such various characters in the consecutive centuries with different but intersecting stories of the haunting imperialism. Phillips further highlights the modernity of ongoing oppressive haunting by writing these stories in the 21st century.

Moreover, Phillips shows how the stories of the two mothers are seemingly disconnected but in fact quite interrelated and intertextual. As Ilmonen indicates, "Monica's story cannot be read without a story about slavery" (206). The former African-descended slave mother is emancipated from slavery; however, she never becomes free in her life. Her slavery and exploitation continue in the practices of the masculine streets and she is defeated against such a cruel system when she dies in the end. Then, two centuries later, white and free-born Monica is left alone by her husband as a single working-class mother because he leaves to fight for the freedom and the independence of the Caribbean from the centuries of exploitations and slavery by the Empire. By being a single working-class mother with her two mixed-race sons, Monica also succumbs to the oppressive system and commits suicide in the end. Thus, the trajectory of imperialism and capitalism which devastates the life of the former slave mother also ruins the life of the free-born white Monica. Both, being a woman in two different centuries, are the victims of the class they belong to and both are the sufferers of the similar oppressing systems. Drawing on Clingman's argument on another work of Phillips, I assert that, in *The Lost Child,* "we have the postcolonial inheritance in Leeds" (351); an inheritance from the former slave mother to Monica.

What Phillips presents through these interconnected mother characters of two different centuries is, as Ledent and O'Callaghan quote from Derek Walcott in their work, "'gathering of broken pieces' to re-store 'shattered histories'" (qtd in 230). They indicate this is the "re-membering" which "is at the very heart of Caribbean writing" (230). Thus, Phillips presents the sufferings of the oppressed through one of the most oppressed identities; motherhood. Through the motherhood of Monica, Phillips "re-

members" the motherhood of the former slave mother. Thus, it is significant how he represents Monica and the former slave mother in the settings of two significant periods under their conditions of race, gender and class.

Through such characterisation, Phillips in *The Lost Child* presents plural Other mothers and refutes three ideological and patriarchal assumptions of motherhood identified by O'Reilly, i.e., *idealisation, depoliticalisation*, and *naturalisation*. I also employed the first two in the analysis of *The Final Passage*. I would like to remind them quite briefly here again. *Idealisation* sets unattainable ideals for the mothers without considering their individual differences and specific conditions. In addition, *depoliticalisation* regards motherhood, not as a political entity and does not make a connection between motherhood and politics.

I argue that in *The Lost Child* also, Phillips first refuses *idealisation*. He particularly characterises "unideal" and "dysfunctional" mother figures who cannot meet "ideal" expectations of traditional motherhood in the conditions where they are expected to mother their children. Drawing on Patricia Hill Collins's identification of mothers in nuclear family models, I put forward that Phillips's mother characters here also have not been "lucky" enough to be one of these "deemed better" mothers "who 'catch' legal husbands, who live in single-family homes, who can afford private school and music lessons for their children" (182). By emphasising the presence of "dysfunctional" Other mothers in his novel, Phillips disturbs the societal codes on "ideal" motherhood, debunking the assumption of *idealisation.*

Furthermore, by the significant contexts of his mother characters, Phillips unveils that mothering practice is seriously affected by the sociopolitical and economic inequalities by refuting *depoliticalisation*. For example, the former slave mother and Monica cannot afford taking care of their children since they are exploited by the colonial and capitalist practices. Therefore, Phillips offers that motherhood must be considered as a political entity and the political status quo when motherhood is performed has significance. This way, Phillips also deconstructs *depoliticalisation* assumption of motherhood, by politicising its identity and practice.

The other concept, *naturalisation*, is defined by O'Reilly as an assumption in which motherhood is supposed to be an instinctive practice, so every woman knows how to mother their children with ease. Phillips, in *The Lost Child*, refutes this assumption mainly by employing such a character as Monica, who cannot mother her children "properly" under her circumstances, questions her mothering skills often in the novel and does not find herself suitable to "mother". Through Monica, Phillips shows that motherhood is not an instinct that may come to all women, and mothers may need their own mothers, sisters or other role models to be able to "learn" mothering practices. He also accentuates that motherhood could be performed "properly" if only the convenient conditions are provided for the mothers. Thus, I argue that Phillips also negates the assumption of *naturalisation* in this novel, adding one more layer in his representation of motherhood since *The Final Passage*.

By going against the grain and debunking the idealised and conventional motherhood norms again in this second novel, Phillips has created significant mother figures.

Accordingly, in the rest of this chapter, I will pursue exploring Phillip's deconstruction of normative motherhoods by analysing the contexts in which these characters are represented. In *The Lost Child*, there exist more "dysfunctional" and disempowered mother characters, and they are different from the mothers in *The Final Passage* regarding the contexts and their disempowered representations as both women and mothers.

4.2.1. Nameless Slave Mothers and Their Nameless Children

The novel opens with the story of an emancipated slave mother with her son, neither of whom has a name to be called or "recognised". The mother is presented with her having lost her grasp of reality and being called the "Crazy Woman" around her in the city of Liverpool in the 18th century. Phillips's choice of this time and place for the setting is significant because, as he explains in his non-fictional work *The Atlantic Sound*, "by the end of the [eighteenth] century Liverpool was by far the largest and most vigorous participant in the English slave trade, its docks playing host to more slave ships than London and Bristol combined" (31). Therefore, Liverpool of these times seems to be a suitable setting for the depiction of the miseries of a slave mother with her child. England, as Phillips explains, was the last station of the "triangle" of the "middle passage" (*The Atlantic Sound* 31), and it has been the "third homeland in [the slave woman's] lifetime" (*TLC* ch. 1). Hence, I argue that Phillips counters particularly two patriarchal norms of motherhood, *idealisation* and *depoliticalisation*, by positioning a former slave mother character in the setting of 18th century Liverpool, and I analyse how he represents this mother character in such a context.

Before analysing the motherhood representation of this nameless freed mother, it is requisite to explore her contextual background at this point. Motherhood was seen as a reproductive condition for the continuation of slavery; therefore, slave women were encouraged and even forced to bear more children (Bush 69; Cowling et al. 224; *Encyclopedia* 1126; Marquis 100; West, "The Double-Edged Sword"). Emily West calls motherhood for the enslaved as a "double-edged sword" ("The Double-Edged Sword of Motherhood Under American Slavery"), emphasising the complexity of this practice for the slave mothers. It was contradictory that for the continuation of enslavement, the productivity of the female slaves was essential while these slaves did not have any agency or right in their motherhoods (Bush 70). Although these mothers generated resistant acts among themselves (Bush 78; Collins 49; Cowling et al. 225; Shaw 239), the experience of motherhood was mostly daunting. Therefore, some women resisted giving birth or even killed their children to save them from being a slave. Thus, it could be clear that conditions created by imperialism and slavery thwarted these slave mothers from mothering their children.

However, these conditions were not eased after the emancipation of these mothers. Referring to the slavery abolishment period in the nineteenth-century post-Civil War U.S., Emily West writes:

> In those first days of freedom after the war, women and men contented with a host of challenges. They had to secure food, clothing, and housing. They had to determine where they would live, how to access a legal marriage, how to find family they were separated from, and where to educate their children. As former slaves, they had little or no possessions or money to start their new lives with. Under chaotic conditions and institutionalized racism, life as a freed person was difficult in the United States. ("Emancipation and Thereafter")

It is understood that with the abolition, the "freedom" for those emancipated slaves was not achieved immediately after all. In this quotation, it is also important that it was not easy for these people to access jobs and living facilities after centuries of the absence of freedom and self-dependence in their lives. Stephanie J. Shaw states, "Slaveholders had to provide some food, clothing, and shelter to those they claimed to own" (237). Thus, these people were suddenly "released" to earn their own bread into a capitalist market which was established to exploit them for centuries. West also indicates that slavery later turned into a cheap labour force for these freed slaves. They started to be paid for their workforce for minimum wages. It could be claimed then that this abolishment of slavery and the freedom of the slaves were only in law but not in practice, and, in fact, they did not experience much change or improvement in their living conditions.

These cases were even more challenging for the mothers because their emancipation also meant the emancipation of their children, who were a profitable workforce for the slaveholders (Ariza 409). Thus, freed mothers started to be seen intentionally as "bad" mothers to pave the way for the slaveholders' tutelage of these children. As a result, Marília Bueno de Araújo Ariza indicates:

> [B]ad motherhood became associated with poor women and especially with those who were coming out of slavery – a simple yet powerful code that rapidly worked to identify all African-descended women, their natural incapacity to live up to the expectations of genuine womanhood and to raise and educate their children. (418)

It seems that the motherhood of the African freed mother was not welcomed by the slaveholders, who did not accept their emancipation. Thus, the conditions that were

created by the slave owners for these mothers were used as an excuse to shame and blame these mothers, claiming that they were not suitable for motherhood.

Phillips's nameless emancipated mother character seems to be reminiscent of these conditions of emancipated slave mothers. As stated in the novel, the mother has already been on the journeys of the Trans-Atlantic trades three times that far, and she has survived these journeys, at least "physiologically". Although it is not stated directly in the narrative how and when, it is understood that she is emancipated. Being freed, she tries to earn her own money to make a living for herself and her son, but they still perish in poverty. Since she is depicted in eighteenth-century Liverpool, her emancipation comes much before the Slavery Abolition Act in 1833 in Britain (Henry). Therefore, it can be seen in the novel that Liverpool, as the recent "vigorous participant" of the slave trade, is not at all ready to welcome a newly freed Black mother.

The description of her house, whose rent she cannot afford, depicts the harsh conditions she tries to survive with her son, "she lies down on a handful of straw in a tiny room under the low roof. The broken windows are stuffed with brown paper and scraps of besmirched fabric, but the cacophony of noise still penetrates" (*TLC* ch. 1). They do not have a safe house where the landlord easily enters whenever he pleases. In addition, this landlord watches the house to judge the mother by looking at her guests. Choosing such a context for a former slave mother in the eighteenth-century of Liverpool, Phillips seems to be politicising motherhood. His representation of a former slave mother figure definitely presents that motherhood is a very "political

undertaking, with [significant] social or political import[s]" (*Matricentric Feminism* 14) because he presents the difficult impacts of political status quo on the mothering of a former slave mother. Thus, Phillips refutes the *depoliticalisation* of normative motherhood and starts politicising the concept of motherhood from the very beginning of his novel.

In the novel, although the mother endeavours to find a job to ease their poverty, the answer she hears from the employers is, "We've no work in this place for a woman with child" (*TLC* ch. 1). Here it is seen that her survival becomes even more challenging when she is a mother, which again shows the "quadruple*"* colonisation of these Black slave mothers even after they are emancipated. When she hears such an answer from the employers, "she we[eps] bitterly at the thought that she would most likely never reestablish herself in employment" (*TLC* ch. 1). Thus, they beg in the streets with her son to feed themselves. The former slave mother's conditions could be interpreted by drawing on Ariza's argument. She writes, the emancipated slave mothers "were workers often perceived as irascible, undisciplined, untrustworthy intermediaries between the house and the street. They did not have the means to support their children and actually depended on their children's income to support their families" (419). Similarly, the former slave mother does not have the sources to feed or educate her child, and they beg together to feed themselves. Nevertheless, she is accused of lacking sources as a mother, whereas she is not offered any, being rejected everywhere.

When their conditions with her son deteriorate, she finds no choice but to earn her living through prostitution; however, this brings more trauma to her and her child. Since she prostitutes at her own home, her son is obliged to witness them. This tragedy is narrated in these words: “These scowling men revelled in improper conduct and were prepared to pay to have brisk knowledge, and once their joyless noises were at an end they dropped a coin on the way out as they stepped over the pile of tatters that was her child” (*TLC* ch. 1). In these words, how a mother’s despair and impossibility to be able to mother her child “expectedly” but to traumatise him instead, even though not intentionally, could be seen.

Her son’s vulnerability and her guilt as a mother are uttered later in these words: “Her poor son, who lay with his body curled tightly and his desperate hands clasped over his ears. (My child what have I done to you in this place? Will you ever forgive me?)” (*TLC* ch. 1). It is seen that the slave mother is aware of the traumas her son is left with and has a conscience for her child. She also feels shame and guilt, but she is, in fact, not offered any other choice but to be able to feed her son. Phillips’s depiction here seems to acknowledge Cowling et al.’s argument upon the emancipated mothers that these mothers were never seen as suitable for motherhood in the “masculine” streets (Cowling et al. 230). It also seems that these emancipated mothers were even pushed more to the periphery because they were regarded as “misfit”.

In the narrative, the former slave mother starts prostitution when the doors are closed upon her to afford their life with her son. Phillips, therefore, seems to call the reader to question whether it is her or society’s “mischief” when they do not give a job to a

mother with a child. Perhaps, she could be easily accused of having "low morality, excessive sensuality, sexual availability and absence of maternal feelings" (Cowling et al. 229). However, Phillips demonstrates in his narrative that she is not sexually available or insatiable; rather, she is sexually exploited. In society, when women are seen as only "sexual bodies" and "commodities" to be sold or when they are to earn their lives through their bodies, there always remains an open door for them to be exploited.

Thus, I put forward that although this "former" slave mother is thought to be emancipated from slavery, her enslavement is perpetuated through her body, which was seen as a "key to [the] enslavement of black people" by the colonial slaveholders (Camp 543). Ariza also claims that these emancipated mothers "were the living heritage of slavery. Their sociability, their colour and their poverty were wrong. Their past was shameful and they had no future" (419). That is, it cannot be claimed that the slave mother is a "free" woman since she still "lack[s] . . . a possessable body" that is "the first premise of slavery" (Privett 258). Instead, her enslavement continues under the class and gender inequalities because "the desirability of her body . . . was nothing more than a commodity on the market of male passions" (Frątczak-Dąbrowska 8).

Nevertheless, in the novel, society seems to overlook the status quo where such (former) slave mothers are to mother. As a result of this overlook, how women are held responsible for their disadvantages is represented through the former slave mother's landlord. It is apparent in the narrative that prostitution is not a "choice" of

the mother, but she is led to it by society. However, when the landlord talks to Mr Earnshaw about the mother after she dies, he utters:

> The artful minx affected a superior attitude, but when her stomach was empty, she would walk through the streets seeking those like yourself, with elegant shirts and silken breeches, and murmur a wistful account of having fallen on hard times . . . there were many men conversant with her merits, for eventually she gave free admission to her bed. (*TLC* ch. 9)

The landlord mentions the mother as if she deceived these men for her "insatiable" desires using her "merits". However, as the landlord indicates in these words, she in fact needs to feed herself and has a son to feed as she has "fallen on hard times". Nonetheless, he sees these "hard times" as made-up excuses for the "minx" mother to take these men into her bed.

The landlord here, as a symbol for society, chooses the easy way to read the case, which is accusing the individual, the desperate mother, rather than the society and the underlying conditions which lead her to her "fall". However, as O'Reilly indicates, "the problem is not with the individual woman or classes of women, but with a society that does not confront its own economic and social injustices" (*Encyclopedia* 102). Still, the lack of this confrontation leads to the lack of empathy and understanding toward these mothers, and it seems that this empathy is what Phillips encourages readers to generate.

The mother is also depicted with her pride. She is in need and takes care of their children alone, but she does not accept the help from Mr Earnshaw, although he has opportunities to help. Moreover, he might be, in fact, one of the reasons for her suffering with his "shipping" business. When she cannot afford her derelict apartment,

for instance, she does not ask for help from Mr Earnshaw. Instead, she prefers to earn her money by begging or prostituting since she knows that he slowly has detached himself from them and "[m]other and child were now little more than a burdensome secret" for him. As a proud woman, rather than submitting to a man, she submits to the wild capitalist and patriarchal system. Despite her conditions, her trying to uphold her standards is given in these lines: "Suddenly, the shoes are temporarily held captive in the unforgiving mud of an unpaved road, but she nevertheless struggles to remain womanly in her deportment" (*TLC* ch. 1). It could be understood that she is still attempting to remain "womanly". She desires to be seen as "empowered" although "she is a diminished woman who, before her time, has yielded reluctantly to age and infirmity" (*TLC* ch. 1). It is clear, then, that the mother does not quit attempting to survive in this wilderness, but doing her best cannot be sufficient under the conditions she was left with.

Another issue with the freed slave mother is that she somehow survives these Trans-Atlantic journeys physiologically, but not psychologically. As Barbara Bush indicates, surviving these journeys brings other challenges. Bush states that these slave mothers "had to raise their children in adversity and adapt to the irreversible physical and cultural dislocations they had experienced" (80). These are what the former slave mother character experiences. However, in addition to her inability to find a suitable job or accommodation in Liverpool and her difficulty in raising her child, she has also been seriously traumatised due to these journeys. In order to understand her post-traumatic conditions, her enslavement story is given through flashbacks in the narrative when she remembers them in the most undesirable times. The most vivid

images of the times when she worked on the plantation and was sent as cargo in "the infamous triangle" (Smethurst 10) are narrated. First, like many other slaves, she was forced to work in the plantation fields:

> She remembers long days in the West Indian fields digging with a rod of pointed iron under the burning sky; she remembers restless nights as black as soot listening for the sound of footsteps approaching the door and wondering whether tonight it would be her turn to be covered. But Master never came to her. (A Congo woman, too dark). (*TLC* ch. 1)

Along these lines, the harsh working conditions in the plantation are presented. As Rheddock indicates, women were forced to work in these fields as much as men and their workforce and power were regarded as equal (65). The cargo preferences are also significant here. The narrative states that the mother is "too dark" to be sold or to appeal to the buyers. Thus, at first, she was not preferred to be shipped away "until one day she was hoisted onto the back of a wagon full of sickly property and carried to the town square", then "her short time in the Indies reached an abrupt conclusion" (*TLC* ch. 1). This uncertainty the mother experiences like the other Black slaves is reminiscent of Frantz Fanon's term of "certain uncertainty" (83) that describes the condition which the Black slaves were "surrounded" with. As stated in these lines of the novel, these Black slaves did not know when to be separated from their "homes" and where to be displaced, and they felt distressed due to this uncertainty, and the only certainty they had was the uncertainty in their lives as Fanon argues.

The narrative of the former slave mother further describes the harsh conditions of enslavement. During the journeys, the human cargo "was chained and manacled in the hold", and in the basement of the ship, "she tried hard to recall the simple dignity of a bowl from which one might eat or the long-forgotten pleasure of a few breaths of clean,

pure air" (*TLC* ch. 1) where she was kept chained. Her sexual exploitation and rapes add to her enslavement in addition to her work force exploitation. Although she has sexual intercourse voluntarily and emotionally with Mr Earnshaw, who shows his affection to her, in these moments, she often recalls the rapes she had to endure during the Atlantic journeys. Whenever she is with Mr Earnshaw, "She found herself back on the ship with the captain stirring himself to quick, frenzied spasms, after which she was confined to her corner, where she prayed that he might now leave her alone" (*TLC* ch. 1). These lines again present the severity of the exploitation and traumas she has endured. Hence, looking at her circumstances, it does not seem possible for this former slave mother to be able to overcome all these traumas and perform "nurturing" motherhood. Such descriptions in her story maintain Phillips's refutation of the norm of *depoliticalisation* in the novel.

Nonetheless, it is ironic that it is Mr Earnshaw who decides that the woman "[is] ill-suited to be a mother" "[d]espite her headstrong nature" (*TLC* ch. 10). However, he is also aware that "[i]t wasn't her fault, but life had ushered her down a perilous course and delivered her into a place of vulnerability" (*TLC* ch. 10), narrated in the novel. Here, Mr Earnshaw seems like a "good" partner to the mother, worrying about her and "her son" and understands that it is not "her fault", and their conceiving a child was not a forced one. However, his finding the mother as "ill-suited to be a mother" could also be reminiscent of the slaveholders' accusing African-descended mothers as "bad mothers" (Ariza 418) due to these mothers' unsuitable conditions. Still, the mother is expected to raise her son alone from a white man who is one of the conductors of these cargo ships. Therefore, her case also resonates Cowling et al.'s argument. They claim

that the "abused" Black women had to bring up their children on their own even though they had them out of rapes by the white men (229). Even though it is apparent that Mr Earnshaw and the emancipated mother have their child out of intimacy, Earnshaw's "ship" business and his decreasing affection towards the mother and son contradict it.

It is seen in my analyses that Phillips's novel presents the "unideal" contexts for the slave mother. Thus, Phillips seems to reveal the impossibility and irrationality of expecting such a stigmatised and marginalised mother to meet the "unattainable expectations" of society on motherhood. He does this by revealing the capitalist and patriarchal oppressing systems where the former slave mother cannot survive, and he thus encourages to question how such a mother all alone "can do it all, instinctively and with ease" (*Matricentric Feminism* 14). Consequently, I put forward that he also deconstructs the *idealisation* of patriarchal motherhood with the former slave mother.

Although here the main focus is on the representations of motherhood in *The Lost Child,* the narratives' treatment of these mothers' children is also noteworthy. The intertextuality between the characters of different stories, which is the most prominent quality of the novel, is foregrounded particularly through these children. This intertextuality could be observed most clearly when the black boy of the former slave mother travels to his new "home" with Mr Earnshaw. In their journey, they are marooned in a hurricane in the "moors" with Mr Earnshaw, and they take shelter in an unknown man's house. The hospitable man looks at the boy and thinks that "the ill-dressed child seeme[s] adrift and *lost.* It occur[s] to the stranger that this boy *might have been discovered upon the moors, a runaway of some sort"* (*TLC* ch. 10*;* my

emphasis). This unnamed boy, Heathcliff of *Wuthering Heights,* is reminiscent of Tommy here, who gets lost in the moors in the main narrative, and also of the black boy who appears out of the moors to Emily Brontë, resulting probably in her creation of Heathcliff. This "lost" boy is also representative of all these children of the "dysfunctional" mothers and motherlands, who cannot protect and/or mother their children under the most unfavourable conditions of patriarchy, capitalism, and colonialism.

Nevertheless, these children are also represented by the attachment and responsibility they feel towards their mothers. To exemplify, the unnamed boy, who is implied to be Heathcliff, has much more responsibility than he can carry. Similar to Leila and Calvin, this mother and son also "has [not got] any other companionship" (*TLC* ch. 1). Therefore, they have a strong bonding, and the boy's sense of responsibility towards his mother is narrated as such, "The unblinking child stares back at [his mother] in a manner that suggests that the requirement that he bear responsibility for her well-being sits surely on his young shoulders" (*TLC* ch. 1). Moreover, the son takes this responsibility so seriously that in any case of danger, he "hovers *protectively* over his afflicted mother" (*TLC* ch. 1*;* my emphasis). These lines are significant because they suggest how her son empowers her former slave mother by his "protection". It is later narrated that "she feels grateful that her child is helping her" (*TLC* ch. 1). As in the case of similar mother analyses in this study, this mother also endeavours to survive for the sake of her son, even though she fails in the end due to her exposure to harsh mistreatment. Thus, the narrative presents that although the conditions are not suitable to create a mother-son bonding, the mother and son achieve this bonding.

Moreover, the narrative presents this mother with her love for her child and the guilt she feels because of the conditions she was able to offer him. In the scene when she is defeated to death, and she thinks of her final farewell to her son, it is narrated, "she looks *lovingly* in the direction of her peaceful child. She taught the boy how to walk, and now she must walk away from him. She must go. A skeleton hung with rags. Another journey, another crossing" (*TLC* ch. 1). Even when she is dying, she looks at her child "lovingly". Thus, her "unquestionable" love for her child can be seen here. Although her motherhood causes her unemployment and more suffering for both her and her son, she never accuses her motherhood or her son of these. However, she feels responsible and blames herself because she thinks that "she has ruined [her son] by the example of her own indolent misery" (*TLC* ch. 1). It is necessary to note here that the mother accuses herself, seeing her misery as an "indolent" one rather than blaming the system which has made their life miserable. O'Reilly identified that poor mothers tend to be accused of lacking sources rather than the system (*Encyclopedia* 1012). It seems that the former slave mother has internalised the society's ideology on "ideal motherhood" and blames herself, which must be exactly what the oppressing system wants her to feel.

However, what needs to be accused is not the mother for their failure or "fall", but the juxtaposition of the systems of slavery, capitalism, and society that have led her mothering to "fail". Nevertheless, she is hopeful for her child's future as a mother. She believes, quite similar to Leila, that her son will never be a servant of slavery: "[s]he has seen the other boys, ornately attired in silks, with silver collars and satin turbans,

walking behind fair ladies so they might attend to their mistresses' trains, or quickly administer smelling salts, or take charge of their fans. But other boys, not her child. Her son will never walk behind a fair lady" (*TLC* ch. 1). In these lines, it is seen that even though she cannot help him to do so, her son will somehow move upward in this social class system and will never be the black slave of "a fair lady". As Brophy indicates, "[b]oth the Crazy Woman and Monica bequeath, imagination, then, a set of alternative insights into walking as a practice, albeit a precarious one, of freedom" (168-169) because it "is coded as a way of exercising 'freedom'" (166). Here, Phillips appears to emphasise that although these mothers are not offered opportunities to "unchain" themselves and perform "proper" mothering, they believe that their children will be able to create these opportunities themselves because their mothers have done the "best" they could for these children. They at least taught them to "walk"—out of these systems.

4.2.2. Working-Class Mothers and Their "Lost" Children

Monica is another working-class, lonely, stigmatised and "dysfunctional" mother of the novel, presented in the 1960s in Leeds, Northern England. It is significant how Phillips employs 1960s Leeds as a setting for a white working-class single mother and her two mixed-race sons. Ledent and O'Callaghan read this setting as a "difficult and contested place at home" (244). Using such a setting, Phillips amalgamates his autobiography with his fiction. He comments on one of the motivations behind this novel in an interview and utters, "obviously, for me as a young boy in Leeds, feeling I don't fit in because I'm black, and everybody else is white . . . there are all sorts of reasons why one feels as though one is not fitting" (Clingman, "The nature of

empathy" 605). This quote shows how he amalgamates his story into the narrative of Ben and Tommy, who do not fit in and are bullied in the racist Mother country. As Pichler indicates, "Phillips's novels show that the borders of the British nation are fixed and firmly established on the pillars of colour and descent" (59). Thus, such a setting serves to present the difficulties of Monica as a white mother with her two brown sons because of their racial background and affiliations. Moreover, with their mother, Monica, Ben and Tommy do not also "fit in" because of their low social class, which they feel most ashamed of.

This setting could also be read as a continuation of *The Final Passage*, as their time settings are simultaneous. While Leila struggles with her son due to their Black skin in 1950s London, stigmatised as a working-class Caribbean outsider, Monica struggles in 1960s Leeds in her "white" skin with her "brown" sons as a working-class marginalised single mother. As I also analysed in the third chapter focusing on *The Final Passage*, these times were when England, as the Mother Country of the Empire, was (un)welcoming immigrants from the Commonwealth countries. Therefore, like other immigrants, Monica with her brown sons also seems to be seen as a "threat" to the order of society, which is especially presented in Mrs Swinson's narrative in the novel. Lisa McKenzie indicates that working-class mothers with their mixed-race sons generally live in "ethnically diverse urban neighbourhood[s]" (1344) residing in council states, and they were stigmatised because of their social class and affiliations with the Blacks (1343). Monica then seems to be quintessential for such mothers.

Using such settings, Phillips may also present the unveiled narratives at the times these novels are set in. The 1960s was a significant time in the second-wave feminism for women's "liberation", but as I indicated, this wave of feminism has been notorious for its perspective towards motherhood. The feminists of second-wave, such as Simone de Beauvoir, regarded motherhood as the main oppression of women. Emma Gross claims that the perspective on mothers and mothering in this wave of feminism "were intensely gloomy and painfully critical of women's choices" (269). Hence, it seems the liberation did not become successful for mothers, such as Monica. As a result, as seen in the former slave mother, Monica also cannot "free" herself from society's oppression because of her gender, social class and motherhood. By such representations, Phillips again presents the ongoing systemic oppression of the ignored and silenced ones in significant times of history. Therefore, I put forward that through using such specific times and places with a further focus on race and class discrimination, Phillips once again deconstructs motherhood's *depoliticalisation* and politicizes it significantly.

In the characterisation of Monica, as Giovanna Buonanno claims, Phillips appears to be inspired by Rhys's female characters who struggle with "loneliness, marginalisation and displacement" (96). While Monica is a chatty and questioning little girl, taking part in musical competitions and winning awards, her mutation and deterioration over time are seen in the novel as a result of her loneliness, marginalisation and societal stigmatisation. Monica's feeling of loneliness especially starts in her first year at the University of Oxford, where she is marginalised due to her lower-class background compared to the university's standards. Monica's acceptance

to the university is an extraordinary case from the beginning. As Oxford is famous for its "preference" for higher social classes, Monica's chance of being accepted there is quite low. Her teachers even discourage her from applying to this university because no alumni from her high school has ever been accepted to universities in that league, and "Monica would not be able to point to any relative who had attended" them (*TLC* ch. 2). However, her brightness and success in different fields enable her to take place there.

Although her acceptance to such a "high-class" university has been an opportunity for Monica, she cannot fit into the society of Oxford, and "she [finds] everything vexing to cope with, be it making friends or simply handling the heavy silver knives and forks in the college dining hall" (*TLC* ch. 2). As Kasia Boddy argues, "the habits of another class can be . . . opaque" (8) for Monica. Therefore, she experiences alienation from her environment. However, she finds a common point with "Others" in "the Overseas Student Association, whose members seemed better able to recognize her" (*TLC* ch. 3). Then, being recognised here comforts Monica because recognition is a crucial element for self-recognition and identification, which Monica had difficulty forming at Oxford and overall in her life.

In her marriage, Monica is not recognised either, although she marries Julius, a member of the Overseas Student Association, with love and contentment. Her husband likes her because "this Monica Johnson never agitate[s] for more visibility in the relationship [as his previous wife did, and she appear[s] to be content to anticipate his desires and protect him from the world" (*TLC* ch. 2). However, this lack of expectation

and visibility, again, leads Monica to mutation, self-isolation and loneliness. As a couple, Monica and Julius severely lack communication in their relationship. Although they both know they need to talk to each other on certain matters, they abstain from doing so and leave many issues unspoken. Thus, such a marriage deepens Monica's loneliness. For instance, when she enjoys reading books and stories during her first pregnancy, the problem she encounters is the lack of someone with whom she can discuss these books. Therefore, after a while of this enjoyable pastime, "she had to admit that none of the collections aroused any elation in her, and more often than not, the volumes were returned unread" (*TLC* ch. 2).

However, her most deepened and gruelling loneliness starts when she leaves her husband because he intends to turn back to his "homeland" to fight against the Empire for freedom. Having followed her husband and his ambitions but not being cared for enough, Monica becomes a single mother, which turns into a stigmatising title for her in society. After her husband deserts them, she leaves with her sons for Leeds, the northern part of England, where she can find a job as a librarian and affords a small neglected flat in a council state where mostly "Pakis" live as the other marginalised in England. However, her stigmatisation and marginalisation deepen here. Beverley Skeggs indicates that working-class women "are subjects of ridicule and prurient fascination, often sexualized, and associated with dirt and disease" (qtd in McKenzie 1346). Monica also encounters such stigmatisation as a working-class single mother in the novel. She is watched by her neighbours and at her job. Since she is a single mother, she is considered an "immoral", "loose", and hypersexual woman. This stigmatisation is particularly seen when Ben's friend asks him: "How many uncles

have you got?" (*TLC* ch. 6). It is understood here that the parents of her children's friends also denounce Monica, which makes their children utter such sentences to her son.

However, the biggest struggle Monica endures in Leeds is the economic problems. Here, her motherhood turns to be a "burdening" one. Monica cannot afford to look after her two sons because Julius does not support them in any way. O'Reilly indicates that working-class single mothers have difficulty providing housing, clothing and even feeding their children properly (*Encyclopedia* 1012). Having the same problems, Monica starts working double shifts. However, she still cannot afford to provide for her sons with even some pocket money. Since she works double shifts and carries the psychological burden of being a single mother, she starts spending less time with her children. Thus, it is apparent in the novel that Monica cannot support her children psychologically either, which makes her mothering much less "ideal". O'Reilly also emphasises that single mothers, like Monica, "are then expected to parent effectively at a time when their emotional and economic circumstances have deteriorated, when they are often least able to provide emotional support for others" (*Encyclopedia* 1013). Yet these expectations, of course, cannot be met by these mothers. Furthermore, Monica's loneliness and struggle to cope with all these are given explicitly in the novel, and it is narrated, "she wished, above everything else, for somebody to help her out, for she knew that things couldn't go on like this for much longer" (*TLC* ch. 3). Therefore, the only drudging element for Monica is not suffering financially but also psychologically as a single, lonely, working-class mother.

Phillips here shows how such mothers like Monica cannot meet the "ideals" of motherhood and how they should not be expected to do so. Therefore, he presents the "unideal" conditions which thwart these mothers from reaching any idealisation in their motherhood. The representation of Monica in her conditions as a single, lonely and working-class mother in 1960s Leeds could be read as the refutation of the normative *idealisatio*n of motherhood, since the conditions of Monica which deter her from mothering "properly" are foregrounded.

Continuing with Monica's (im)possibility to mother her children, I put forward that Monica's loneliness as a mother and her cry for help lead to her "failure" to meet *maternal practice* expectations, a term coined by Sara Ruddick. According to Ruddick, in her ground-breaking work *Maternal Thinking*, a mother should meet three demands of her children: *preservation, growth* and *social acceptability* (17). I have already explored these terms in the Methodology part of this study in more detail. However, I will briefly offer their definitions here again to remind.

Ruddick claims that, first, a mother should preserve her child from any danger and should show "minimal attentiveness to [her] children" (20) because children, as fragile beings, are dependent on their parents for their safety. Second, a mother should "nurture . . . emotional and intellectual growth" of her children. She argues that children should be accompanied through their journey from childhood to adulthood in dealing with emotions or sexual desires. She also asserts that mothers should take individual differences into account. As the last point, she asserts, *maternal practice* is realised when the mother provides the ground for their children's acceptability in

society, which "is made not by children's needs but by the social groups of which a mother is a member. Social groups require that mothers shape their children's growth in 'acceptable' ways" (21). Therefore, mothers should recognise what is desired by society for the acceptance of their children. She asserts that although some contradictions exist in these expectations, mothers should find the proper way to have their children get accepted in the social milieu.

Before continuing with the analyses, it is more than significant to highlight again that my aim here is not to argue that Monica is a "bad" mother who failed to meet these three demands that Ruddick identifies. Rather, I aim to show "why" Monica could be assumed as a "bad" and/or "failed" mother and warn against these immediate labels. I also remind here to pay attention to the underlying reasons for these "failures" before labelling these mothers. I have already highlighted that I do not aim to present the lack or inapplicability of Ruddick's identification of maternal practice into different contexts. Ruddick overtly indicates that her analysis is limited because it is based on the mothers of "middle-class, white, Protestant, capitalist, patriarchal America" ("Maternal Thinking" 347), of which she has the most knowledge and experience. However, I would like to point out that although Ruddick clearly asserts that these demands are based on a specific group of mothers, these demands can easily be accepted universally and traditionally as the main demands that have to be met by "every" mother.

As a result, such a universal acceptance may lead to judging or blaming Other mother representations (both in literature and real-life), such as Monica. To illustrate, Mrs

Swinson, in the novel, is one of those examples who can easily judge mothers when they cannot meet these demands. In the narrative, she judges Monica because she cannot clothe her sons "properly" before sending them to her. She expects every mother to meet the physical needs of her children; however, some mothers, such as Monica, simply do not have the sources to meet them and thus send their children to "surrogate" mothers, such as Mrs Swinson. Hence, it is significant to beware of such possible accusations towards Other mother representations due to such identified demands. On the other hand, Ruddick also highlights that "mothers are as diverse as any other humans and are equally shaped by the social milieu in which they work" (17). Therefore, my aim here is to warn against the universalisation of these demands, explore why Monica is thwarted from meeting these supposed demands, and show that Monica is another example of these diverse, plural and Other mother representations.

Monica "fails" in her *maternal practice* by not being able to meet any of these three demands of Ruddick; *preservation*, *growth* and *social acceptability*. First, Monica cannot *preserve* her children, and they start looking after each other. As "the man of the house" (*TLC* ch. 6) at the age of eleven, Ben starts to hold the responsibility at home. He narrates this case in these words, "Every morning I'd make sure that Tommy's school uniform had been ironed, and that he'd had some breakfast, and then I'd check that he'd got his school bag and make sure that he set off on time" (*TLC* ch. 6). Although this is a "maternal" practice, Ben takes responsibility for these practices as the older son, even though he should not be supposed to. Ben, in that regard, acts very much like a surrogate mother for Tommy. Monica also cannot preserve Tommy's

life, who one day gets lost and is found dead in the moors. It is understood in the novel that he was murdered by the pederast Derek Evans, who is Monica's boyfriend.

Such a tragic loss brings Monica's death in the end. After losing Tommy, Monica is hospitalised in an asylum and Ben is sent to a foster family. Monica cannot overcome being psychologically abused by Derek and losing her child, and she always blames herself because of all occurrences. When Ben visits Monica in the "convalescence home" (*TLC* ch. 8) after Tommy's death, Monica utters, "I suppose I should have kept a closer watch on both of you. Will you forgive me?" (*TLC* ch. 6). Then Ben maintains his narrative, remarking, "[s]he looked like all the life had been knocked out of her, and I wanted to say that it wasn't her fault, but I just couldn't get the words out" (*TLC* ch. 6). Here, the devastating effect of Tommy's death on Monica as a mother is seen. However, what is significant is that Ben does not accuse her mother of what happens. For instance, the narrative also explicitly points out that Tommy was a "convenient" target for Derek. For instance, Ben remarks in his narrative, "[a]s a family we had nothing, so of course it was straightforward enough for somebody to turn our Tommy's head. It's easy to turn a kiddie's head when he has nothing" (*TLC* ch. 6). Their lack, absence and poverty are emphasised in Ben's words. Even before targeting Tommy in this case, Monica is an "easy" target for Derek with her burdening loneliness and overwhelming motherhood in her most demanding conditions. Thus, it is seen that although Monica fails at preserving her children, the narrative seems to underline that it is not her but the conditions and inequalities' fault.

Second, Monica cannot contribute to her sons' *emotional and intellectual growth*. Children get more neglected as they grow up, especially emotionally. In the beginning, Monica is more "able" to show her affection and love towards her children even though she is passing through hard times. Ben narrates, "[a]t night Mam sometimes gave me an extra-big hug as she tucked me and Tommy into bed, and I liked that" (*TLC* ch. 6). However, with the deterioration of her burden and mental health, the emotional distance between her and her sons increases. Tommy, for example, starts to wet his bed in the foster home, which is a pathological symptom at his age, showing that he has been emotionally neglected. After a while, "he'd learned to take the sheet off by himself and rinse it through in the bathtub" (*TLC* ch. 6). Ben narrates that Tommy told him once that "he wishe[s] he was an orphan" (*TLC* ch. 6), which shows how lonely the sons feel even in the presence of their mother, which makes their situation more complicated. However, Monica cannot be present enough in her mothering even if she wants because she cannot meet her own emotional needs and demands either. As Heather Milton indicates, the mother characters should first satisfy their self-needs and form their self-identities to raise "healthy" sons (56). However, Monica can never do that due to her wearing and unsuitable conditions.

Tommy is also presented with his never-ending hunger, which is again an indicator of his lack of emotional nurturance. Upon that, Giovanna Buonanno comments, "Tommy's hunger conceals his desire for affection and acceptance, and a longing for his father" (99). However, as can be seen, Buonanno also refers to the lack of a father in a son's life rather than directing it only to the absence of Monica, which is also important. The narrative also presents too exhausting life of Monica to provide

emotional nurturance to her sons. For instance, Ben remarks in his narrative that "[a]t the end of the day Mam was always tired, and sometimes she didn't even have the energy to talk to us". When she sits and talks to her children, Ben utters, "[i]t was painful to watch [her], and I was always happy when she gave up and just went to bed" (*TLC* ch. 6). Along these lines, the impossibility of extensive care from Monica for her children while working two shifts is obvious. As O'Reilly indicates, it cannot be fair to expect such mothers to perform "to parent effectively" (*Encyclopedia* 1013) when they are not provided with the necessary sources.

Lastly, Monica "fails" at ensuring the *social acceptability* of her children into society. Most significantly, Monica acts unaware of her children's being mixed-race, and she does not raise awareness about it during the boys' growth. In the narrative, there are some references to the children being mixed-race through their experiences of bullying and stigmatisation, especially with their physical appearances. For instance, Tommy is constantly bullied at the camp they attend for the underprivileged children or at school because they are the only Black boys there. Ben narrates, for instance, that "[w]henever I ran into him [Tommy] at the camp, he looked like some little lost boy you wanted to hug" (*TLC* ch. 6). It seems that Tommy has always been an "easy" target to be "lost" and bullied with his naivety and silence since he is neglected. Even on his first day at school, when he is asked where he is from, he answers "England", and the whole class "release[s] a volley of scornful cackling that threatens to swell into hysteria" (*TLC* ch. 5). Although it is presented like the class laughs at Tommy because he gives a general answer telling the name of the country they all already live in, it also appears to be an underlined reference to his being mixed-race. Thus, his skin

colour and physical appearance make this class laugh, which overtly shows these students that he is related to those "Jimmy Jamaicas" (*TLC* ch. 6). Thus, they are not "purely" from England.

Ben is also bullied by the boyfriend of Helen, the daughter of the family where he is fostered. The boy insults Ben with these words, "why are your lips so fat? And it's like you've got wool on your head instead of hair" and "you look like a fucking burned sausage" (*TLC* ch. 6). From these lines, it is understood that Ben has West Indian physical characteristics transmitted by their father. He is also stigmatised once he gets the job in the *Evening Post* to deliver newspapers. His boss warns him prejudicially and remarks, "I always have to keep an extra bloody eye open with you lot. Always on the cadge, aren't you? I mean, face facts, nothing good will ever come of you kids" (*TLC* ch. 6). He utters these words only because of his hybrid racial background and the neighbourhood where the working-class and people from other "inferior" races, i.e., Pakistan, reside.

It could be understood by these instances that Monica's sons have been marginalised and outcast both because of their race and social class. However, their awareness of their social class surpasses their racial background awareness. The boys even act as if they had not been aware of it at all. Ben utters, "I was nearly fourteen, and the emotion I was most familiar with—besides anger, that is—was shame" (*TLC* ch. 6) because of the poverty they have to endure. Still, he does not mention their racial background at all. Lewis and Craddock indicate that "[i]n a racialized context, children's emotional socialization – practices that help children to understand and regulate their emotions –

overlap the successful racial socialization to help them cope with racial discrimination" (98). In this case, it could be expected that it is Monica as the mother who should raise awareness about her children's racial background, and she also needs to teach coping and protection mechanisms to her children against racial assaults. However, as Brophy asserts, the narrative of Monica demonstrates "the survival lessons that parents, especially but not exclusively mothers, struggle to impart" (163). As a result of Monica's struggle in imparting survival lessons, Ben and Tommy fail at coping with racial discrimination as they are not equipped with the tools or the practices through which they can "understand and regulate their emotions". This inevitable failure of Tommy and Ben to integrate into society is interpreted as "victim and victim-survivor alongside stigmatization, exploitation, and abandonment" by Brophy (162). While Tommy cannot cope with and becomes a victim in the end, Ben somehow survives all the stigmatisation and alienation and becomes a "victim-survivor" by building a life for himself.

Although Monica is expected to be the resource for providing coping mechanisms to her sons, she also, as a woman and mother, is vulnerable to even harsher stigmatisation and assaults from society. She is castigated because she resides in a disadvantaged neighbourhood, lacks economic power, and has mixed-race children as a white mother. Thus, as a literary mother, Monica exemplifies Lisa McKenzie's argument on real-life working-class white mothers of mixed-race children. McKenzie writes that working-class mothers who live in the council states with their brown children "suffer from negative stereotypes and stigmatization because of the notoriety of the estate, because they are working class and because they have had sexual relationships with black men"

(1343). Thus, it is understood that Monica is only one example of these stigmatised working-class mothers. Moreover, Monica's failure in her teachings to her sons is a reminder of the argument upon mother-daughter empowerment (Rich 246). According to that argument, a daughter could be empowered only if her mother is empowered. Although in this claim, empowerment is highlighted through the mother-daughter connection, this seems applicable in the case of Monica and her sons. Since Monica cannot protect or empower herself against labels and alienations, she cannot teach that to her children either. Therefore, Monica, understandably, cannot prepare her children for acceptability in society, into which she has never been accepted. Ruddick also indicates in his book, "The criteria of [social] acceptability consist of the group values that a mother *internalizes* as well as the values of group members whom she feels she must please" (21; my emphasis). Since, in the novel, Monica cannot internalise the norms of society, by which she is stigmatised, she consequently "fails" to transmit them to their children to realise their *social acceptability*.

Reminding my aim in employing Ruddick's terms, I highlight that I did not only explain "how" Monica "fails" at meeting motherhood's demands here. My emphasis in this study has always been "why" she "fails" to meet these demands and, thus, could be seen as "dysfunctional". From my analyses, it is evident that "the social milieu" of motherhood that Ruddick mentions is the main reason for her "failure" rather than her "character" as an individual mother. Thus, I again underline that every mother's representation in literature (or real life) should be analysed and judged by her context and circumstances rather than how she meets the expected roles, demands and duties imposed on her position.

Additionally, looking at my analyses, it could be clearly understood that these demands identified by Ruddick are quite *child* interested rather than the *mother*. In the novel, how Monica cannot meet her own needs is quite obvious. For instance, Monica has her own dreams. She is keen on music and poetry. She loves reading, particularly Wordsworth, and she also wants to write. However, after being a single mother, all her dreams and interests get "lost" as well. She has to work double shifts to survive, and she needs to look after her two sons by herself, which she "fails" at. Thus, the narrative presents that it might not be fair to expect the mothers to meet all these demands alone when they cannot meet their own needs. As a result, the narrative does not aim to deconstruct the maternal practice demands that Monica "fails" to meet but it highlights the unattainable expectations from mothers in different contexts. By contextualising Monica in working-class, single, lonely, stigmatised and with mixed-race sons, which are all the reasons for her "failure" in maternal practice, Phillips seems again to deconstruct both *idealisation* and *depoliticalisation*, because the context where Monica stands as a mother is quite "unideal" and political.

Moreover, I should point out that what makes Monica's motherhood more "dysfunctional" and her sons' integration into society more difficult is the absence of a husband and a father in their lives, making the conditions even harsher for them. Monica thinks that "part of defining herself as a mother involved watching and appreciating the role of the father, but not only did Julius continue to behave indifferently towards his wife, these days he also appeared to be increasingly removed from his two children" (*TLC* ch. 2), which results in his complete absence from his

children's lives, not even contacting once. O'Reilly underlines that the presence of a father, supporting his children emotionally and financially ensures "less parenting stress" for single mothers (*Encyclopedia* 1123). Furthermore, Buzzanell writes, "Unemployment, the lack of the father and any relationship with him, and being socially isolated are among the risks for the poor mothers" (364). As a literary mother, Monica appears to be quintessential to the conditions of poor working-class mothers. Hence, she presents another successful and empathetic depiction of Phillips's characters.

Meanwhile, as I indicated earlier, despite her unequal and challenging conditions, Monica still doubts her mothering and blames herself for her inadequacies, although she prioritizes motherhood in her life. One of her reasons for leaving her husband is to "mother" her children properly because she thinks that they, with her husband, do not give their children what they need. She remarks, "I don't know how to be a mother to these two boys, who deserve a damn sight more than we've been able to give them" (*TLC* ch. 2). However, due to her deteriorating conditions, she loses control over how to mother her sons. When she already gives birth to two children and raises them, "[s]he remain[s] unconvinced that she would ever grow comfortably into the role of a mother, for the speed and ease with which her body had dealt with pregnancy suggested a lack of any real engagement with the process" (*TLC* ch. 2). In this scene, she already mothers her children, feeding, loving and even prioritising them in her life; however, she feels insufficient, which accentuates more when she becomes a single mother.

Moreover, when Monica meets Derek, her boyfriend, for the first time and he asks whether she has any photos of her sons, she "worrie[s] that he'd think she was a failure of a mother" (*TLC* ch. 3) because she does not have any photos of them. Even such a minor incident can lead her to feel "bad" about her mothering "skills" because she is aware that there are high expectations and societal codes of motherhood which almost no one can (and should not be supposed to) achieve fully. About the self-blaming of poor mothers, O'Reilly indicates that these "[p]arents [in poverty] acknowledged that depression and despair associated with the poverty they experienced impaired their parenting and increased self-doubt about their capacity to parent" (*Encyclopedia* 1013). Monica also experiences such "depression and despair", resulting in self-doubt and blame due to her lack of sources and poverty. In these lines and such questioning of Monica, Phillips's narrative presents how *naturalisation* is not possible for mothers, which is another normative patriarchal conception. According to this norm, "all women naturally know how to mother" (*Matricentric Feminism* 14), so it is an instinct. However, with Monica, it can be seen that it is a "practice" than a skill, and the conditions which influence this "practice" are quite important in its performance. Therefore, I highlight once again that Phillips's novel shows that it is not the individual mothers but the society responsible for its "social and economic injustices" (O'Reilly *Encyclopedia* 102). Therefore, I often argue in this study that by representing such mothers, Phillips calls to question society's daunting and haunting impact on the experience and understanding of motherhood.

On the other hand, it is necessary to underline that despite all the struggles, absences, and blames, Monica tries her best to partner with her husband and mother her children.

For example, she makes a "home" out of everywhere she goes. When Julius lives in a small basement in his doctoral study years, he thinks that Monica's "simple rearrangement of the furniture create[s] more space, and replacing the heavy curtains with cheap blinds brought light flooding into the flat" (*TLC* ch. 2). When they move to London later, "[i]t was Monica who had organized their move to London and found this single bed-sitting-room in Ladbroke Grove" (*TLC* ch. 2). She not only finds this flat for her family, but she also makes a "home" out of it. Her effort is narrated in these words, "there was nothing on the walls, no pictures, not even an old calendar or a mirror, so tomorrow she would begin the now familiar project of going out to the shops and street markets to see what she might find to liven up the place" (*TLC* ch. 2). Making "home" out of the places to where she is "dragged" by Julius seems to be the job of Monica as a woman and/or wife, so it has been a "familiar project" for her. Such a depiction of her house is also reminiscent of Beverley's house, which I have explored in the previous chapter. However, unlike Beverly, Monica at the beginning has a "hope" to create a "home", similar to Alice Walker or bell hooks's (grand)mothers. Even though Monica is a "white" mother, so her case cannot be explained through Walker or hooks's mothers, their struggles regarding the social class are similar.

Monica maintains her efforts to make a life for herself and Ben after she is released from the hospital, where she is treated for her "madness" after Tommy's death. However, society again poses many obstacles for her not to able to make it. First, any interaction with her son is prohibited by the foster family and his school, leading to more deterioration of the mother and son's relationship. While Ben is not already pleased with his new foster family, also prohibited from seeing her mother, he thinks,

"I now had no choice but to live with these people, and perhaps try and forget Mam" (*TLC* ch. 6). Their lack of interaction and communication wholly breaks their bond. Hence, while Ben wants to believe that his mother tried her best for him and Tommy, he still questions her, thinking, "[w]hy didn't she try harder and put him first? Why didn't she want him?" (*TLC* ch. 7). In such questioning, it is seen that Ben, as the son of a self-doubting mother, is also prone to blame himself for the absence of her father or mother. This blaming indicates the pathological outcomes of the "dysfunctional" family environment resulting from the absences, i.e., absent father and mother, absent care and absent economic sources.

The novel's use of multi-focal narratives enables to present such questionings of Ben and Monica. Although the novel first employs zero focalisation, not assigning a specific space to the voice of the oppressed. Later, it continues with first Ben's and later Monica's internally focalised narratives. Such employment of multiple focalisation in its narrative enables more understanding and empathy for the novel's characters, which Phillips is famous for. For instance, how Monica attempts to maintain her life after she is "released" from the asylum is particularly narrated by herself in the chapter titled "Alone" in the novel, which is also suggestive by its title.

In her narrative, Monica particularly narrates the perceptions which stigmatise her as "irresponsible, immature, immoral, and a potential threat to the society and stability of society", as Val Gillies identify the conceptions towards working-class mothers (2). Although Monica attempts to get her library job back, she is not welcomed there anymore. Her employer even warns her by stating that her "eyes were saying

something that was going to get [her] into bother with men" (*TLC* ch. 8). After being dismissed from this job, she looks for and finds other jobs; however, she cannot fit in any of them anymore. She also has difficulty finding a suitable place to accommodate herself. When she accepts the help from a male friend for accommodation, her neighbours there easily label her as a menace, and she gets expelled from this flat. Monica narrates that her male friend is also maliciously-intended in helping her. After he provides her with a place for her to stay, he kisses her during one of his visits. Monica narrates, "but when I don't return the kiss, he looks at me like I've failed some kind of a test" (*TLC* ch. 8). This incident reminds her of the man who attempts to exploit her in this convalescence home and thinks she has lost her mind enough not to realise his sexually exploitative attempts. All these cases represent how Monica, as a single mother in need, is unwelcomed in society. She is expected to be "prurient" (qtd in McKenzie 1346), "immoral" (Gillies 2), voluptuous, and "loose" because of the conditions she finds herself in. All this stigmatisation and alienation result in her committing suicide.

On the other hand, in her narrative, Monica seems to defend herself and call for empathy. She narrates her feelings, uttering, "I'm sorry, but nobody can say that I didn't try. Once I realized that I'd messed up, I did everything I could to try and get Ben back" (*TLC* ch. 8). By these lines, she emphasises that she should not be judged insensitively and her conditions and endeavours should be considered. This way, she is protective of herself toward any possible accusations, which might easily label and stigmatise her as a "bad" mother, by not seeing the underlying inequalities and stigmatisation that lead to her condition. Hence, Phillips's narrative presents that

Monica is not an unaware, careless, and "bad" mother, as she could be stigmatised. Rather, she is well aware of her mistakes and efforts, which makes her suicidal in the end. Her characterisation again deconstructs the *idealisation* of motherhood, in which the mother is expected to be all-knowing, angel-like and flawless.

Such depiction may make Monica more sympathizable, which seems to be one of Phillips's purposes in his writing. By giving "voice" to Monica through her focalised narrative from her maternal perspective, Phillips seems to achieve *matrifocal voice* here. That is, he gives Monica a chance to utter her feelings, struggles and explain and defend herself by showing how she "grapple[s] with patriarchal notions of idealized motherhood" (Podnieks 180). In so doing, Phillips carries Monica "from silence to speech" (O'Reilly and Podnieks 2), and he converts her *object* status to *subject* status (Hirsch 12), which are the ultimate aims in matrifocal texts. Therefore, Phillips "develops" his writing to represent the mother by unmasking and voicing her.

To conclude my analysis on Monica, I draw on Smethurst's interpretation of Phillips's female characters and put forward that Monica is also a woman who is "on the edge, not in control of [her] destiny, [her] identity shaped and conditioned by others" (12). Hence, I cannot entirely agree with Lucasta Miller's claim about Monica's depiction. She argues that, in the novel, "[d]epressingly, the message seems to be that some people are born outcasts, regardless of circumstances" (Miller). However, in this study, I particularly underscore that the "circumstances" that are shaped by society could be the main reason for the sufferings of the outcasts due to their birth into specific classes or groups. Moreover, these "circumstances" should not be seen as dogmatic and not

left unquestioned. Rather, as Phillips encourages through his novels, first, these circumstances should be questioned and analysed to understand the underlying conditions which may influence some normative roles in society, such as motherhood.

4.2.2.1. The Disempowered Daughter of a Disempowered Mother

During all the hardships and challenges she has to endure, Monica also does not have the support of her mother whose support she may need most. Her mother Ruth Johnson cannot happen to be an empowered or empowering mother figure for Monica. As I indicated earlier, "a strong mother-daughter connection is what makes possible a strong female self" and empowered mothers have a significant role in empowering their daughters (O'Reilly *Matricentric Feminism* 22; Rich 246). However, Ruth is an oppressed woman and mother under the gaze of her husband. Whenever "she could feel her husband closely scrutinizing her, . . . she began to feel oafish in herself" (*TLC* ch. 2). Although "[t]hirty years ago Miss Patterson had been a vivacious, buxom young shopgirl who, from the time she left school at fourteen, had taken the eyes of the local lads", after her marriage to her husband, who showed a great interest in her (quite similar to Julius's interest in Monica), she starts going silent "by not arguing and locking away all her talk inside of herself" (*TLC* ch. 2). Thus, it is presented in the narrative that Ruth is a silenced and oppressed woman/mother as a result of her marriage to Mr Johnson. It is narrated that she even cannot have a second child although she desires it because her husband "Ronald Johnson had determined that one would suffice" (*TLC* ch. 2). In her home, then, she does not have the power in decision mechanisms either.

Such a marriage draws a quite similar image of her marriage with Julius from which Monica escapes in order not to have such an ending as her mother's. Therefore, her mother can only set a precedent for Monica for something that she should not be. This attitude of Monica towards her mother then appears to be an example of *matrophobia* which is identified by Adrienne Rich. Rich defines this term, in her *Of Woman Born*, as "the fear not of one's mother or of motherhood but of becoming one's mother" (236). In other words, it is the case when the daughter does not accept the powerlessness of the mother and she feels irritated with it. Therefore, she becomes afraid of resembling her mother in their motherhood, and she avoids her mother's motherhood practices. However, such a fear prevents any powerful or healthy connection between Monica and Ruth, which might in fact have been nurturing the both. Thus, the gap between them enlarges. Afraid of becoming like her, Monica avoids her mother and then liberalises herself from the patriarchy of both her father and Julius. Although this liberalisation might have had favourable outcomes for Monica, the society's stigmatisation toward single women/mothers resulted on the contrary. Furthermore, the lack of her mother as a leading figure and lack of her support accentuated Monica's loneliness and her "(in)ability" to mother since as Milton claims, "the lack of a mother could . . . cause a young woman to fall" (58).

4.2.2.2.The Impossibility of a White Surrogate Mother

In his narrative, where he embraces the plural motherhood possibilities and represents them in the most "realistic" depictions, Phillips nevertheless presents, again as in *The Final Passage*, that there is no possible surrogate "white" mother for the mixed-race boys of *The Lost Child*. Since Monica cannot afford to look after her sons in her

poverty, she has to leave them to foster families; however, none of these families could foster the boys. First, Ben and Tommy are fostered by the white and Christian Mrs Swinson, although she volunteers to foster these mixed-race boys, she displays discriminatory behaviours. Rather than caring about the boys' emotional needs, she cares about whether they are baptised or not. She constantly criticises them, their upbringing, and their mothers. Although she is aware that she is going to foster children in need, when she meets Ben and Tommy for the first time, she judges them by these words:

> I've been doing this for a long time, and during the war I even had evacuees—Cockneys from London—dirty beggars all of them, and I couldn't understand a word they were saying, but at least their mothers knew to send them with some proper clothes. (*TLC* ch. 5)

For a voluntary foster "mother", in her words she does not seem to be welcoming enough of those "Cockneys" or "dirty beggars" as much as she is supposed to. Here, she also criticises Monica because she expects her to clothe her children properly as a "traditional" mother would do. However, Mrs Swinson, who could be representative of the normative societal codes, seems to ignore the fact that because Monica does not have enough sources, she has to give her children to be fostered.

Mrs Swinson is even more unwelcoming towards Ben and Tommy perhaps because they are mixed-race from a disadvantaged neighbourhood of Leeds. When she undertakes to "civilise" the boys, as the colonisers aimed to civilise the "savages", she is concerned about how to "fix" them. For instance, referring to the boys' curly hair which is a characteristic of their racial background, she says, "[w]hat am I supposed to do with this hair of yours?" (*TLC* ch. 5). However, it is given in the narrative that

Monica "would ruffle" the same hair of them and see it as "lovely hair" (*TLC* ch. 6). Here, Monica and Mrs Swinson appear to be represented oppositely.

Moreover, when Mrs Swinson finds out that Tommy has found a watch at school and took it, she immediately labels Ben as a "barefaced liar" and Tommy as "a thief" (*TLC* ch. 5). Later, she goes to school in order to direct her complaint to the school principal. However, the principal finds her reactions too much and "tries to work out why she's so *angry*". He also thinks that "[s]he's *not* exactly acting like *a guardian*" (*TLC* ch. 5*;* my emphasis). This "anger" of Mrs Swinson is quite reminiscent of the white's anger and frustrations when they (un)welcome the Blacks from the Commonwealth countries in *The Final Passage.* Her anger, thus, might be a continuation of similar stigmatisation. As a result of Mrs Swinson's attitude, the boys feel "nothing but intense hatred for this miserable woman, who is not their mother and never will be" (*TLC* ch. 5). It is understood here that Mrs Swinson has not been an "appropriate" surrogate for the boys. Here, I do not argue that Phillips—as an author appreciating the plurality of motherhood experience—presents the inapplicability of surrogate mothers, but represents the impossibility of a prejudiced "white" surrogate mother for mixed-race Ben and Tommy.

After Tommy's death and Monica's losing her sanity, Ben happens to be fostered again to the white Gilpins family. Even though they are much better at hosting Ben than Mrs Swinson, they cannot exactly welcome Ben to their family, seeing him still somehow as a possible threat against their two daughters. The Gilpins is a family who approve their neighbours because they are "*proper* Asian" (*TLC* ch. 6*;* my emphasis). Thus,

perhaps they also saw Ben as a "proper" boy to foster at first. It is also this family who prohibits any contact between Ben and Monica unless any supervision is provided, and they make this decision without consulting it with Ben. By all these "unsuccessful" experiences of boys' fostering by the whites, I argue that Phillips once again demonstrates the improbability of "reconciliation" between the white and Black under the conditions of the boys in the novel (Smethurst 12).

4.3.The Absent/Present Fathers

Phillips depicts various father characters in *The Lost Child*, but what they have in common is that they are oppressive figures in the lives of women and children. In the novel's first chapter, the readers are presented with Monica's father, Ronald Johnson, who tries to be an excessively "present" father. He is introduced with his "benevolent" patriarchy through which he was able to "rule" his family even at a time war was "causing many families to temporarily break apart and accustom themselves to the novelty of female leadership" (*TLC* ch. 2). Although "benevolent" is chosen as the word in order to refer to Mr Johnson's patriarchy, the narrative shows later that his patriarchal attitude towards his wife and people around him is "outwardly benevolent", and he is, in fact, one of those "sinister patriarchs" (Ledent and O'Callaghan 239). Thus, his choice of "ruling" patriarchy instead of "female leadership" in his house is more foregrounded in the narrative. His oppressive patriarchy is particularly observable in his relationship with his wife, "who had already [been] bullied . . . into near-mute submission" (*TLC* ch. 2).

Her father's disempowerment and mutation of her mother leave Monica with no choice but to leave her home and father. Even before leaving home, Monica stands against her father's oppression of her mother and herself, knowing that she will never let him turn her into a woman like her mother. Thus, she acts rebellious against him, and she even dresses rebelliously when she needs to be with him because she is sure that her father "had fixed ideas about how women should present themselves" (*TLC* ch. 2). However, her father believes he did his best to raise her "single-minded" (*TLC* ch. 2) daughter. Therefore, when she wants to marry a man "who originated in a part of the world where decent standards of behaviour and respect for people's families were obviously alien concepts" (*TLC* ch. 2), her father cannot find a reason why she wants to marry to such a man because "nothing in Monica's upbringing had ever led him to imagine that his daughter might turn out to be loose" (*TLC* ch. 2). These words in the narrative reveal his character and his perspective toward Julius and Monica. For Mr Johnson, building a life with a "Caribbean" man could only be an act of a "loosely" raised woman. Thus, he does not only show racist but also sexist inclinations, and such ideas lead him to turn his back on his daughter on her decision rather than supporting her. He expects his daughter to submit to him without questioning as his wife does. These manners of him display how self-absorbed he is in his actions and unaware of the oppression he creates in his wife and daughter's life. Therefore, as a father, Mr Johnson could never be a shelter for his daughter to seek help in her single mothering to ease her life economically and/or psychologically. As a result, he is, in fact, one of the reasons for Monica's failure in her life, unlike his beliefs.

Monica's husband Julius, on the other hand, is more of an absent father for Ben and Tommy. Driven by the analyses of absent fathers as a result of slavery in *The Final Passag*e, I put forward that Julius Wilson maintains the Caribbean "culture" of father's absenteeism in England. Although he is more educated and idealist in many terms, Julius as a father is quite similar to Michael of *The Final Passage*. Likewise, he is presented with his self-orientation. Similar to Michael, he is also not in England "to play; [he is] here to make the most of this opportunity" (*TLC* ch. 2). However, Monica does not seem to be an "opportunity" that England presents him. Instead, Julius considers both fatherhood and husbandhood as a "duty", but he seems to become easily tired of fulfilling both.

Monica is Julius's second marriage. Before her, he gets a divorce, and it seems his both marriage's fate parallels each other. In both, he is too self-oriented to see his wives' needs and absent in his fatherly "duties". His perspective toward his first daughter is narrated in these words, "the ordeal of fulfilling his parental obligation to the child from his first marriage had been taxing his dwindling reserves of goodwill and optimism" (*TLC* ch. 2). Thus, she becomes a "burden" he does not want to deal with. Furthermore, when he leaves his ex-wife and daughter behind, it is narrated, "a part of him want[s] to miss his daughter. Five years later, however, he still feels uneasy that he has never, not once, been touched by any sense of guilt or loss" (*TLC* ch. 2). It is seen here that although Julius "forces" himself to do so, he cannot establish emotional bonding with his children as a father. However, what could be strange is his not feeling any guilt or loss due to his absence. Perhaps, this could also be seen as a result of the Caribbean man's pathologized psyche due to slavery (Davidson 95).

Even though Julius aims to save his country from England's colonisation and slavery, he is unaware that he, himself, is enslaving women for his benefit. For instance, when he gets married to Monica, her happiness is based on Monica's being "handful" around the house, "He couldn't have been happier, for this young Englishwoman seemed to take enthusiastic pleasure in cooking, cleaning, and studying, as though each activity flowed naturally into the next" (*TLC* ch. 2). Although they get married voluntarily, loving and appreciating each other's existence, over time, Monica turns into "a burden at the centre of his life" (*TLC* ch. 2). He also cannot understand when his ex-wife complains that he "doesn't understand that [she] too [has] needs" (*TLC* ch. 2). Hence, rather than understanding and sympathising with women in his life, Julius becomes disdainful of them. It is narrated that he feels ashamed that he is related to such "inferior" women to him when Monica loses her enthusiasm to learn and read more, and since his ex-wife already does not have the intellectual capacity as he does. Besides, his children Ben and Tommy look like "sullen-looking boys" to him (*TLC* ch. 2), and he becomes so distant from the concept of fatherhood that Monica reminds his duty as a father to "kiss his son". In brief, Julius is never able to fulfil his duties as a father to his children or a husband to his wives.

Patrick Brontë, Emily's father, is another patriarchal father figure in the novel. He disregards his three daughters and favours his son Branwell over them. He is a father "who has shown no desire to present himself at the bedside of his ailing daughter" (*TLC* ch. 4) when Emily is on her deathbed. The only time Emily could feel close to her father is when he tries to teach her "how to shoot a pistol" (*TLC* ch. 4). However,

this act of his is, in fact, his attempt to substitute his “good for nothing” son with her daughter Emily. Even though this is his aim, the narrative presents that after their shooting session, Emily “would smile, and then momentarily retreat to the kitchen and continue baking bread or ironing clothes” (*TLC* ch. 4). Thus, it is seen that Patrick Brontë's attempt to masculinise his daughter is surpassed by her “womanly” duties, which she is supposed to meet in Victorian England. Apparently, such a father figure leaves an irreplaceable lack in the lives of his daughters, who have already lost their mothers. This lack is particularly evident in Emily's longing to see him on her sickbed and her disappointment with her father's not showing up.

As another father figure, Mr Earnshaw, on the other hand, is presented as a more caring but still absent father. When he is around his house, which is rare, he plays with and takes care of his children, although he does not show affection to his wife. He also worries about his children and thinks about them when he is away on his “ship business”. His close relationship and care for his children are observable when, for instance, his daughter becomes upset because he cannot stay with them longer. His relationship with the nameless slave mother is also delicate. When he visits her in Liverpool with “a small bunch of freshly picked flowers” (*TLC* ch. 1), they walk and talk, and in the end, he gains her “approval”. Thus, it is emphasised in the narrative that “he had not stooped to using her brutally” (*TLC* ch. 9). However, when she gets pregnant and gives birth to their son, he does not care about them any further than paying for the doctor and providing them with some money, and he “performs” these in order to “unburden” himself from the worrisome fact that he left “them both to a sad fate” (*TLC* ch. 9).

Besides, Mr Earnshaw is an executive of colonialism and plantation with his "ship business" in Antigua and "sugarworks" across the Caribbean. Therefore, as I pointed out earlier, he is also one of the reasons for the inequalities that the slave mother and her son, Heathcliff, have had to endure. Although, in the end, Mr Earnshaw takes responsibility for Heathcliff and takes him "home", Heathcliff is never welcomed there, according to the narrative in *Wuthering Heights*. Therefore, at the end of the novel, not being able to see Mr Earnshaw as a father to himself and seeking his mother, who is dead now, the little boy gets frustrated and begs Mr Earnshaw by murmuring, "Please don't hurt me" with tears in his eyes. This line again presents the impossible reconciliation and protection that might come from the white, coloniser and patriarchal father and the frustration of the black boy as if he was aware of the troubles and stigmatisation they will have to face at "home".

Considering these father figures in the novel, I highlight that Phillips is empathetic and protective in his characterisation of the mother figures. Through his father figures, he seems to accentuate this empathy for his mother characters and presents these father characters as one of the contributing oppressors into the system which exploits these women/mothers. As a result, as Brophy argues, Monica and the former slave mother and their children have been "cast out" and "profoundly vulnerable to the very authority figures who claim to offer protection" over them (164).

To conclude, in this chapter, I have aimed to explore the various mother representations in *The Lost Child.* Following my analyses, I have argued that Monica

and the former slave mother are also two of the mothers, who have been marginalised, stigmatised and outcasted by society. Thus, it is clear in the novel that both mothers cannot perform their motherly duties. However, I have underlined that Phillips, in his work, foregrounds "why" these mothers cannot perform their mothering rather than "how". By doing so, he calls the readers, in a sense, society to question their *naturalisation, idealisation* and *depoliticalisation* of motherhood; thus, their "bad" mother stigmatisation. I have also highlighted that mothers like Monica and the former slave mother cannot be accused because of their lack of sources. Instead, if necessary, the unequal conditions that lead these mothers to such "failures" should be first questioned and accused.

Following these arguments, I note that if the former slave mother is regarded to "fail" in her mothering, it is because she is a victim of the enslavement practices even after she is emancipated; because she is not offered with any sources after her emancipation; because no one supports her in her motherhood to take care of her child; and because society chooses to stigmatise women judicially before realising the underlying conditions leading them to that way. Likewise, if Monica "fails" in her maternal practice, it is because her father fails her in his patriarchal and oppressing doctrines at home; because her husband fails her leaving her alone, not trying to understand her needs, and not supporting her psychologically or economically; because Oxford fails her by not accepting her wholly and even when she wants to return education, it is bargained that she can only return "only after she had 'established a domestic situation that would be compatible with study'" (*TLC* ch. 3) which is not possible in her case as a single working-class mother; because her only friend Derek fails her by exploiting

her loneliness and need of love and affection; and also because the neighbours of her, so the society, fails her when they see her as a "loose" woman and a menace to them. Consequently, it seems that both these mothers become "dysfunctional" because they are victims of the juxtaposition of the capitalist, colonial, racist and patriarchal systems. Phillips, thus, once again presents the significance to understand mother characters in their own contexts exploring the conditions which pave the way for the failure of these mothers' "nurturing" motherings and their "fall". He, thus, presents the voice of the mother Monica in his *matrifocal narrative* allowing her to voice her experience of oppressed and stigmatised motherhood.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This thesis explores the motherhood representations in Caryl Phillips's *The Final Passage* (1985) and *The Lost Child* (2015) through the critical lens of matricentric feminism. It argues that through his motherhood representations in these two novels, Caryl Phillips deconstructs the ideal, universal, and traditional expectations and conceptions of motherhood. Positioning his characters in the most political contexts, Phillips unveils the unequal conditions of race, class, patriarchy and colonialism. He then presents plural mother characters, but his characters' plural motherhood(s) are influenced adversely by the unequal conditions. In so doing, Phillips debunks the normative patriarchal motherhood conceptions identified by matricentric feminism. This thesis also reveals that Phillips achieves *matrifocal narrative*; that is, he succeeds in voicing the maternal experiences of a mother character in *The Lost Child* by giving a space to the narrative of Monica in the novel.

The Final Passage and *The Lost Child* have been fruitful fictional works for analysing their mother characters in this thesis. The novels together present more plural Other motherhood representations in diverse settings and contexts. *The Final Passage* displays plural Caribbean motherhood representations in the 1950s postcolonial

motherland Caribbean and Mother country England through a migration story. Thus, the novel provides different representations of oft-discussed motherhood conceptions (of the Caribbean) in the most controversial times under race and class discrimination, and migration frustration. *The Lost Child* offers even more controversial and diverse settings with a former slave mother in eighteenth-century Liverpool and a working-class white mother with her two mixed-race sons in 1960s Leeds.

While the 1950s were the times England was (un)welcoming migrations from the Commonwealth countries, which has been represented through Leila; the 1960s were significant times for equality and liberation fights and the period of decolonisation and independence struggles of the previously colonised nations. The eighteenth century was also when imperialist practices were at one of its peak times in some parts of England, such as Liverpool, which is the setting for the former slave mother in *The Lost Child*. Then this thesis has shown that these novels represent politically significant times for their mother characters. Hence, when these two novels are considered together, it is seen that they speak of various settings for plural Other mothers and different stages of imperialism by presenting its haunting continuation in different centuries. They, therefore, provide various examples of politically, sociologically and economically engaged Other mother figures for an intersectional reading.

On the other hand, the most significant distinction between these novels is in the way Phillips narrates his mother characters' narratives. A significant "improvement" in Phillips's writing outstands regarding his employing the concept of motherhood in his

oeuvre after the thirty-year gap between his two novels. What Caryl Phillips appears to achieve in *The Lost Child*—albeit not in *The Final Passage*—is to write a *matrifocal narrative* (*Matricentric Feminism* 5). Whereas *The Final Passage* focalises mostly Leila as a daughter rather than as a mother, thus, it has a "daughter-centric" narrative (Daly and Reddy 2), *The Lost Child* concentrates more on the mother Monica's voice. The latter provides a chapter of Monica's narrative where she "can" narrate her experiences and struggles in her first-person narration. Thus, as O'Reilly suggests to do in literature, Monica's motherhood is "thematically elaborated and valued, and is structurally central to the plot" (*Matricentric Feminism* 5-6). By doing so, Phillips achieves to have *matrifocal voice* in his narration. In such a matrifocal writing, he moves Monica from her "object" status to "subject" status (Hirsch 12) by which he "voices", so empowers, the mother. In other words, Phillips paves a way to question the idealised, conventional and "good/bad" motherhood constructions. In short, by the analysis of these two novels, this thesis manifests a crucial point in Phillips's depiction of mothers by his reaching *matrifocal narrative* in his oeuvre.

The first chapter of this thesis lays out its aims and explains that Phillips has pursued to subvert the conventional history and canonical writing by building a space for the histories and narratives of the Other in his oeuvre. Phillips has also been remarkably successful in representing the women's voice in his work, as they are another Other under the dominant patriarchy. Although Phillips's representation of women has drawn some attention, albeit not enough, his representation of mothers has been overlooked in scholarly studies. The female writers' works have been commonly studied regarding their representations of motherhood; however, this thesis has suggested that Phillips,

as a male writer, has also represented motherhood experience strikingly and empathetically. Moreover, his novels present the significance of understanding motherhood to understand the hidden mechanisms of women's oppression. Thus, it has shown that his oeuvre merits closer reading through feminist perspectives.

The second chapter first explores the representations and analyses of mothers in fiction since ancient times, giving place to the significant studies exploring this theme. Providing such a summary of significantly relevant studies has enabled this thesis to position Phillips's mother representations within common literary motherhood conceptions. According to this positioning and analysis, it is clear that Phillips neither sanctifies nor degrades motherhood identity; rather, he presents how this identity and its practice can be influenced by the context where it is performed. As a result, his characterisation demonstrates how traditional understandings and binaries unfavourably impact the understanding and practice of motherhood and ignore the sufferings of Other mothers. Then, the chapter moves on to explore the tenets of matricentric feminism as a pertinent theoretical framework for this study. Matricentric feminism is a useful theory for intersectional readings due to its multidisciplinary formation. This feminist theory is not only based on studies from myriad fields but also adds to them by pluralising, embracing and voicing motherhood. Matricentric feminism argues that exploring motherhood can lead to "social, political and economic change" (*Matricentric Feminism* xv), and it can resist the oppression of women. Since this thesis also has drawn attention to similar issues by the analysis of Phillips's mother characters, matricentric feminism has been a useful tool for this thesis's intersectional analyses.

The third chapter analyses Caryl Phillips's debut novel, *The Final Passage* and its plural (Caribbean) mother characters. This chapter claims that Phillips does not merely present empowered Caribbean mother figures in this novel as opposed to the common representation of the mothers of this culture. Rather, Phillips problematises the mystified, strong, super woman Black mother figures of the island, and he presents plural mothers within the challenging conditions of imperialism, migration, and race and class inequalities. Thus, this chapter suggests that Phillips debunks *depoliticalisation, idealisation,* and *normalisation* assumptions through the novel's mother characters and settings. In *The Final Passage,* Phillips shows how significantly the practice of motherhood can be influenced by the political status quo of the lands where motherhood is to be performed. He thus presents the difficulties these mothers experience taking all the burden of their families alone when there are not enough opportunities to take care of themselves.

The fourth chapter focuses on the "dysfunctional" mother representations in one of Phillips's latest novels, *The Lost Child*. The chapter argues that by employing "dysfunctional" Other mother characters in the disadvantaged contexts, Phillips unveils the social, economic, and political conditions where these mothers are supposed to but cannot mother their children. This chapter suggests that in this novel, too, Phillips deconstructs normative motherhood conceptions; *naturalisation, idealisation* and *depoliticalisation* through his employment of politicised and unideal setting and "dysfunctional" mother characters. Such "dysfunctional" characters as Monica and former slave mother exist as an exclamation against the universal and

traditional conceptions of "maternal practice", thus, they are a reminder of the existence of Other mothers. Hence, through this second novel, Phillips adds to his representations of plural, "dysfunctional", and Other mother representations.

As I stated, "*mothers offer a crucial standpoint* for social, political and economic change. Motherhood is an important category of analysis for understanding women's oppression" (*Matricentric Feminism* xv; emphasis in the original). Thus, I foreground the significance of understanding mothers (literary or real-life) through this study, and I believe that as a twenty-first-century study, this thesis bears significance since it lays bare that there is a possibility of change and equality by focusing on (literary) mothers. Recently, there have been ongoing discussions on who a mother is (or who could be one), what makes her/him good or bad, queer motherhood, adoptive mothers, single or unwed mothers, Birthstrikers, mothers of miscarriages, abortion rights, and psychological and physical aspects of motherhood. Still, it is interesting and exhilarating to see that there are gaps to fill in the academic, particularly literary, field upon these issues. Amy Westervelt wrote in a recent article that "[t]he topic [of motherhood] comes up in fewer than 3% of papers, journal articles, or textbooks on modern gender theory" (Westervelt). She also indicates that although there have been significant developments for women's rights, motherhood has been overlooked, and it "is a still a sort of time machine, shooting women instantly back to 1950" (Westervelt).

Moreover, even though Phillips obviously has been a successful writer to voice mothers, it is also perplexing that his success has been overlooked. This is why I, in

this thesis, have aimed to bring attention to a recent and hot topic- motherhood- with its fictional representations, believing that every act towards equality and understanding is valuable. In that regard, I have focused on Phillips's mother characters through an intersectional reading to reveal the interrelated and systemic oppression mechanisms on motherhood. Looking at the representations of mothers in three previous sequent centuries, I also imply that similar oppressing mechanisms and stigmas towards mothers are still quite apparent in today's world. It also seems that Ruddick's concept of maternal practice is still widely accepted, and the demands of motherhood are expected to be met by every mother, and only by them, regardless of their circumstances. These show that, as many other feminists argue, motherhood is an "unfinished business of feminism" (*Matricentric Feminism* xv), and there is still much more to do about it. As a result, believing in Phillips's "plurality in action", I have argued that Phillips's depictions of motherhood(s) in challenging conditions with all their plurality carries significance with their further implications on the inapplicability of the normative, universal, and ideal motherhood understandings. It also has the power to call the readers to question all these.

As a last significant point, although this thesis has argued that Phillips presents "plural" mother figures in his two novels, these novels do not offer all plural representations of Other mothers, such as lesbian/queer mothers or mothers with "disabilities". This thesis's scope, then, is limited with the mother characters in only two novels by Caryl Phillips. That is, it does not implicate to capture all "plurality" of mothers, or it does not even generalise these argumentations on Phillips's oeuvre. Hence, a more thorough study could be provided to analyse Phillips's oeuvre, by

perhaps building on my argumentations about the mother depictions in these novels throughout this study.

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APPENDICES

A. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Bu tez, Caryl Phillips'in *The Final Passage* (1985) ve *The Lost Child* (2015) romanlarındaki Öteki annelik tasvirlerini annemerkezli feminizm teorik çerçevesi ile inceler. Caryl Phillips'in bu iki romandaki annelik tasvirleri aracılığıyla ideal, evrensel ve geleneksel olarak kabul edilmiş annelik beklentileri ve anlayışlarını yapıbozuma uğrattığını savunur. Karakterlerini en politik ortamlarda konumlandıran Phillips, ırk, sınıf, ataerkillik ve sömürgeciliğin eşit olmayan koşullarını gözler önüne serer. Deneyimlerinde çoğul anne karakterlerin olduğunu, ancak karakterlerinin çoğul annelik(ler)inin eşit olmayan koşullardan olumsuz etkilendiğini ortaya koyar. Bunu yaparken, Phillips, annemerkezli feminizm tarafından tanımlanan normatif ataerkil annelik anlayışlarını çürütür. Bu tez aynı zamanda Phillips'in *anaerkil anlatıya* ulaştığını iddia eder; yani, Phillips *The Final Passage*'ta değil fakat *The Lost Child*'da bir anne karakterinin annelik deneyimlerini bu anne karakterin bakış açısından seslendirmeyi başarır.

The Final Passage ve *The Lost Child* anne karakterlerinin çözümlenmesi açısından bu tez için verimli kurgusal eserler olmuştur. Romanlar birlikte incelendiğinde, farklı zaman ve mekânlarda daha çoğul Öteki annelik temsilleri sunar. *The Final Passage,* 1950'lerde sömürge sonrası anavatan Karayipler'de ve Anne ülke İngiltere'de bir göç

hikayesi aracılığıyla çoğul Karayipli annelik betimlemeleri sunar. Böylece roman, ırk ve sınıf ayrımcılığı ve göç hüsranı altındaki en tartışmalı zamanlarında sıklıkla tartışılan (Karayipli) annelik kavramlarının daha farklı temsillerini gözler önüne serer. Öte yandan, *The Lost Child*, on sekizinci yüzyıl Liverpool'unda önceden köle olan anne karakteri ve 1960'ların Leeds'inde iki melez oğluyla işçi sınıfından beyaz bir anne karakteriyle, daha da tartışmalı ve farklı iki ortam sunar. Bu nedenle, bu iki roman birlikte politik açıdan kritik dönemleri resmeder. 1950'ler, İngiltere'nin İngiliz Uluslar Topluluğu ülkelerinden gelen ve *The Final Passage*'da Leila aracılığıyla temsil edilen göçleri hoş karşıla(ma)dığı dönemler iken; *The Lost Child*'daki 1960'lar eşitlik ve karşıt kültür mücadeleleri için önemli zamanlardı; ancak roman, Monica ve melez oğulları gibi örneklerde görülebileceği üzere, bu tür eşitlik ve kurtuluş mücadelelerinin henüz belirli gruplar için sağlanamadığını gösterir. On sekizinci yüzyıl aynı zamanda İngiltere'nin bazı bölgelerinde, örneğin *The Lost Child*'daki eski köle annenin resmedildiği yer olan Liverpool, emperyalist uygulamaların en yoğun olduğu zamanlardan biriydi. Bu nedenle, bu iki roman bir arada değerlendirildiğinde, çok daha çeşitli zaman ve mekânlarda çoklu Öteki annelik tasvirleri sunarlar. Aynı zamanda, bu romanlar emperyalizmin farklı yüzyıllarda bu annelerin hayatlarına nasıl da musallat olduğunu resmederler. Bu sebeptendir ki, bu romanlar verimli bir kesişimsel okuma için politik, sosyolojik ve ekonomik olarak yüklü Öteki anne figürlerinin çeşitli örneklerini sunarlar.

Diğer bir yandan, bu romanlar arasındaki en önemli ayrım, Phillips'in anne karakterlerinin anlatılarını yazma biçimindedir. Phillips'in iki romanı arasındaki otuz yıllık aradan sonra, yapıtında annelik kavramını kullanmasına ilişkin yazılarında

önemli bir "ilerleme" göze çarpar. Caryl Phillips'in, *The Final Passage*'da olmasa da *The Lost Child*'da başarmış olduğu görünen şey, *anaerkil bir anlatıda* yazmaktır. Diğer bir deyişle, *The Lost Child*'da Phillips annelik tecrübesini bir anne karaktere ses vererek ve onun anlatasına yer vererek, bu annenin bakış açısıyla yazmayı başarmıştır. *The Final Passage*, Leila'yı bir anneden ziyade bir kız çocuğu olarak odak alırken, bu nedenle "kız çocuğu merkezli" bir anlatıya sahipken, *The Lost Child* bir anne karakter olan Monica'nın sesine daha çok odaklanır. Zira bu ikinci roman, okuyucuya Monica'nın birinci şahıs anlatımında annelik deneyimlerini ve mücadelelerini anlatabileceği ayrı bir anlatı bölümü sağlar. Bu tür bir anlatı annemerkezli feminizmin ve annelik kavramını temel alan ve onu güçlendirmeyi amaçlayan çalışmaların nihai amacıdır. Bu nedenle, Andrea O'Reilly'nin edebiyatta yapmayı önerdiği gibi, Monica'nın anneliği "tematik olarak işlenmiş ve değerlidir ve yapısal olarak olay örgüsünün merkezindedir" (Matricentric Feminism 5-6). Böylece Phillips anlatımında *anaerkil* bir sese sahip olmayı başarır. Böyle *anaerkil yazımda* Phillips, Monica'yı "nesne" statüsünden "özne" statüsüne (Hirsch 12) taşır ve bu sayede anneyi "seslendirmiş" ve böylece onu güçlendirmiş olur. Başka bir deyişle, Phillips bu anlatımla idealize edilmiş, geleneksel ve "iyi/kötü" annelik kurgularını sorgulamanın yolunu açar. Kısacası bu tez, bu iki romanın karşılaştırmalı analiziyle, Phillips'in yapıtlarında *anaerkil anlatıya* ulaştığını açığa çıkararak anneleri betimlemesinde önemli bir noktayı başardığını ortaya koyar.

Tezin ilk bölümü, çalışmanın amaçlarını açıklar ve Phillips'in yapıtlarında nasıl da Ötekilerin tarihlerine ve anlatılarına alan açarak geleneksel şekilde kabul görmüş tarihi ve kanonik yazımı yıkmaya çalıştığını açıklar. Phillips, baskın ataerkillik altında başka

bir Öteki oldukları için, kadınların sesini temsil etmede de oldukça başarılı bir yazardır. Edebi akademik çalışmalarda Phillips'in kadın temsili bugüne kadar yeterli olmasa da zaman zaman dikkat çekmiş fakat annelik tasvirleri neredeyse tümüyle göz ardı edilmiştir. Bu akademik çalışmaların annelik tasvirleri incelemelerinde genellikle kadın yazarların eserleri çalışılmıştır. Fakat, bu tez, bir erkek yazar olarak Phillips'in, annelik deneyimini çarpıcı ve de empatik bir şekilde temsil ettiğini ileri sürer. Ayrıca Phillips'in romanları, kadınların ezilmesinin gizli mekanizmalarını anlamak için annelik kimliği ve tecrübesini anlamanın önemini sunar. Bu sebeplerden, tez Phillips'in yapıtlarının feminist bakış açılarıyla daha yakından okunmayı hak ettiğini gösterir.

İkinci bölüm, ilk olarak, antik çağlardan beri annelerin kurgudaki temsillerini ve analizlerini sunar ve bu temayı araştıran önemli çalışmalara yer verir. Bu bağlamda, annelik çalışmalarının özellikle edebiyat kolunda çok önemli isimlere yer verir. Edebiyatta ortak ve yaygın annelik temsillerini inceleyerek, bu bölüm gösterir ki annelik edebiyatta genellikle ikili tasvirlerle, örneğin; "iyi/kötü", kendini çocuklarına adayan ya da bencil, aşağılanmış veya kutsallaştırılmış, yer alır. Bunun sonucu olarak, bazı çalışmalar anneliğin ikiliklerde nasıl temsil edildiğini ve bu tür temsillerin edebiyatta ve gerçek hayatta ne gibi sonuçları olduğunu araştırırken, bazıları da kurgusal eserlerde anneleri güçlendirmeye ve seslendirmeye odaklanır.

Annelik temsillerini analiz eden benzer çalışmaların böylesine bir özetini sunmak, bu çalışmanın incelediği Phillips'in anne temsillerini ortak edebi annelik kavramları içinde konumlandırmayı sağlar. Bu konumlandırma ve analize göre, Phillips'in annelik

kimliğini ne kutsallaştırdığı ne de aşağıladığı açıktır; Phillips daha ziyade, bu kimliğin ve pratiğin, yaşandığı bağlamdan nasıl (kendisinin karakterlerinde özellikle de olumsuz) etkilenebileceğini sunar. Sonuç olarak, Phillips'in karakter temsilleri, anneliğe dair geleneksel anlayışların ve ikiliklerin annelik anlayışını ve uygulamasını nasıl olumsuz etkilediğini ve bu etkilenmeler sonucu Öteki annelerin acılarının nasıl görmezden gelindiğini gösterir. Bunun ardından bölüm, bu çalışma için uygun bir teorik çerçeve olarak kullanılabilecek annemerkezli feminizmin ilkelerini tartışarak devam eder.

Annemerkezli feminizm 1990'larda akademik bir teori olarak akademik çalışmalarda yerini alana kadar, edebiyattaki kurmaca anne analizleri çoğunlukla sosyolojik ve psikanalitik teori ve teorisyenlerden faydalandı. Annemerkezli feminizm de tabii ki bu teori ve teorisyenlerden faydalandı ve faydalanmaya devam ediyor; fakat, bu feminizm aynı zamanda tüm bu çalışmaları bir arada toplamayı ve annelik olgusunu, kimliğini ve tecrübesini multidisipliner, birbirinden bağımsız olmayacak şekilde incelemeyi, onu özgürleştirmeyi ve güçlendirmeyi amaçlar. Annemerkezli feminizm, multidisipliner oluşumu nedeniyle kesişimsel okumalar için faydalı bir teoridir. Bu feminist teori, sadece sayısız alanda yapılan çalışmalara dayanmakla kalmaz, aynı zamanda anneliği çoğullaştırarak, kucaklayarak ve seslendirerek bu çalışmalara katkıda bulunur. Annemerkezli feminizm, anneliği keşfetmenin "sosyal, politik ve ekonomik değişime" (Matricentric Feminism xv) yol açabileceğini ve kadınların sistemik baskılanmasına karşı bir direniş oluşturabileceğini savunur. Bu tez de Phillips'in anne karakterlerinin analiziyle benzer konulara ve direniş ihtimallerine

dikkat çektiğinden, annemerkezli feminizm bu tezin kesişimsel analizleri için yararlı bir araç olmuştur.

Annemerkezli feminizmi teorileştirmede öncü olan Andrea O'Reilly, bu teori kapsamında ataerkil anneliği tanımlamaya yönelik kendisinin de edebi (ve gerçek hayatta) analizlerinde kullandığı ve kullanmaya teşvik ettiği çeşitli araçlar sağlamıştır. Bu romanlardaki annelik figürlerini analiz etmek için bu tezde kullanılan ilk araç "ataerkil anneliğin on ideolojik varsayımı" olmuştur. Bu on varsayım arasından, bu tez için özellikle *doğallaştırma, normalleştirme, idealleştirme* ve *siyasetten arındırma* önem taşır ve bu tez, bu varsayımların Phillips'in ana karakterleri tarafından yapıbozuma uğratıldığını ileri sürer. Bu Çalışma, Phillips'in bu dört varsayımı Leila, onun annesi, Beverley, Monica ve önceden köle olan annenin karakterizasyonu aracılığıyla inceler ve bu incelemelerinde bu varsayımları çürütür.

Bu varsayımsal kavramları burada kısaca tanımlamak çalışmadaki analizleri anlamak açısından kolaylık sağlayacaktır. O'Reilly, *doğallaştırma* sanısını şu şekilde tanımlar: Tüm anneler nasıl annelik edeceklerini bilirler ve annelik içgüdüsel bir kavramdır. *Normalleştirmeye* göre, annelik en iyi çekirdek ailelerde yerine getirilir, bu ailelerde anne evde kocasına eş ve çocuklarına annedir. Böylece anne evde "besleme" görevini üstlenirken baba evin ekonomik ihtiyaçlarını sağlar. Bir diğer varsayım olan *idealleştirme*, annelere ulaşılamaz idealler koyar ve bu ideallerin karşılanmasını bekler. Bu varsayımla birlikte annenin her şeyi çok kolayca ve içgüdüleriyle yapması beklenir. Bu *normalleştirme* ve i*dealleştirme* sanıları, özellikle sanayileşme devriminden sonra aile yapılarında gerçekleşen değişikliklere dayanıyor gibi

görünüyor. Bu devrimle birlikte evler kadınlara, özellikle annelere ait alanlar olarak belirlendiği için annelerin bu alanlara tümüyle hâkim olup kendilerini buraya adamaları beklenmeye başlandı. Yine bu devrimle, çocukluk kavramı gelişti ve çocuk bakımı ve gelişimi önem kazandı. Dolayısıyla annelerin çocukların ihtiyaçlarını karşılaması daha yoğun beklenmeye başlandı ve annelik kimliği bu dönem itibariyle bir toplum normu olarak şekillenmeye başlayıp ideal bir şekilde yerine getirilmesi gereken bir görev olarak algılanmaya başlandı. Son sanı olan *siyasetten arındırma* ise annelik kimliği ve pratiğini siyasetten bağımsız varlıklar olarak kabul görmeye ve onu özel, bireysel tecrübelermiş gibi göstermeye çalışır. Fakat bunu yaparak, anneliğin sosyal, politik ve ekonomik koşullardan nasıl etkilendiğini yok sayar ve annelik kavramının direniş ve değişim için olan potansiyelinin üzerini örtmeye çalışır. Fakat tüm bu sanılar, Phillips'in anne karakterleri aracılığıyla yapıbozumuna uğrar ve Phillips'in karakterleri bu varsayımların aksi için güzel örnekler oluşturur.

Bu tez aynı zamanda Sara Ruddick tarafından belirlenen *annelik pratiğindeki* üç *anne talebini The Lost Child*'da bir Öteki anne figürü olan Monica'nın deneyimlerini ön plana çıkararak sorunsallaştırır. Sara Ruddick önde gelen kitabı *Anneliğe Özgü Düşünme Biçimi*'nde *annelik pratiği* kavramını teorileştirmiştir. Ruddick'e göre, bir anne, *annelik pratiğinde* üç talebi karşılamalıdır. Bu gereksinimler; *koruma, büyütme* ve *sosyal kabuldür*, ve bu gereksinimlerin "her" anne tarafından karşılanması beklenir. Ruddick, ilk gereksinim olan *korumanın* kırılgan ve savunmasız çocuğun yaşamını korumayı gerektirdiğini ileri sürer. Çocuklar fiziksel olarak kendilerine yetemediklerinden, öncelikli olarak anneleri tarafından sağlanması gereken bir yetişkin korumasına ihtiyaçları vardır ve bu ilk pratik ile bu koruma amaçlanır.

Fiziksel koruma daha sonra büyümenin ikinci talebi *büyümede* olduğu gibi entelektüel ve duygusal büyümeyle desteklenmelidir. Ruddick, çocukların sadece fiziksel olarak değil, aynı zamanda duygusal ve entelektüel olarak da büyüdüklerini iddia eder. Bu nedenle çocuklar, yeni dürtüler ve arzular üretirler. Bu nedenle, bu büyümeler sırasında çocuklar desteklenmeli ve teşvik edilmelidirler çünkü çocukların bu dönemlerde bazı katlanılamaz duygulara karşı savunma mekanizmaları geliştirmeleri gerekir. Bu duygularla başa çıkma ve kendilerine özgü entelektüel gelişim yoluyla rehberliğe ve beslenmeye ihtiyaçları vardır. Ruddick'e göre, annenin buradaki görevi, çocuğunun bu duygusal ve entelektüel gelişimini tanımak ve büyümelerinde onlara öncülük etmek ve desteklemektir.

Üçüncü gereksinim olan *sosyal kabul edilebilirlikte*, anne ve çocukların ait olduğu sosyal grup belirleyicidir. Bu talebi yerine getirebilmek için anneler, oldukça değişken olabilen sosyal gruplarına göre neyin kabul edilebilir neyin kabul edilemez olduğunu bilmelidir. Buna göre anne, çocuklarını o toplumda kabul edilmeleri için "eğitmelidir". Ruddick bu gereksinimde annenin kendisinin de içselleştirdiği, zaten boyun eğdiği ve katıldığı toplumsal kodları ve kurallarını çocuklarına aktarmasının beklendiğini öne sürer.

Kısacası bu çalışma, Ruddick'in tanımladığı ve kavramlaştırdığı bu annelik pratiğini kullanarak Phillips'in resmettiği bir Öteki anne karakteri olan Monica'nın bu pratiği anneliğinde nasıl uygulayamadığını inceler. Fakat, burada önemli olan nokta şudur ki, bu tez bu kavramı kullanarak yalnızca Monica'nın bu pratiği anneliğinde "nasıl"

uygulayamadığından çok "neden" uygulayamadığına odaklanır. Diğer bir deyişle, bu tür kavramsallaşmış ve gelenekselleşmiş görünen annelik pratiklerinin nasıl da norm olarak görünebileceği ve bunun bir sonucu olarak da Monica gibi imkanları kısıtlanmış, Ötekileşmiş, ve toplumdan dışlanmış annelerin bu pratikleri uygulayamadıklarında nasıl "başarısız" anneler olarak görülebileceğini analiz eder. Yani, bu tez Monica'yı Ruddick'in annelik pratiği kavramıyla inceleyerek Monica'yı "başarısız" bir anne olarak algılamaz. Bilakis, Monica'nın bu tür kavramlar ve normatif yaklaşımlarla nasıl da "başarısız" ve "işlevsiz" bir anne olarak varsayılabileceğini gösterir ve böyle "tehlikeli" yaklaşımlara karşı uyarmayı amaçlar. Bu nedenle de Monica'nın bu pratiğin isteklerini neden ve nasıl karşılayamayacağını gerekçeleriyle birlikte inceler. Aslında Ruddick'in kuramı Amerikalı, kentli, beyaz, Hristiyan ve orta sınıf anneler üzerinden yazılmıştır ve bu annelerle sınırlı olduğunu kendisi de belirtir, fakat öyle görünüyor ki, bugün bile bu kavramlar ve pratikler böyle spesifik anneleri aşmış ve evrensel ve normatif kavramlar olarak kabul görmekte ve Öteki ya da normatif olmayan annelerin imkan(sızlık)larını ve pratiklerini göz ardı etmektedir. Üstelik bu kavramlar annelerden ziyade çocuk odaklı kavramlar olarak görmektedirler, yani annenin değil de çocuğun ihtiyaçlarını temel almaktadırlar. Bu nedenle Ruddick'in bu annelik pratikleri ve gereksinimleri sorgulanabilir hale gelmektedir. Fakat yine de bu tez Ruddick'in annelik pratiğini yapıbozumuna uğratmayı amaçlamaz, yalnızca bu normatif yaklaşımların nasıl da Öteki anneleri dahil edemediği, üstelik dışladığı ve sonuç olarak daha da ötekileştirdiğini göstermeye çalışır.

Son olarak, bu tez Adrienne Rich'in *matrofobi* (bir kadının annesine benzeme korkusu) kavramından faydalanır. *Matrofobi* kavramı potansiyel anne olan kız çocuğunun "güçsüz" olan annesine benzeme korkusu dolayısıyla da ondan uzaklaşmasına işaret eden bir kavramdır. Bu kavram Adrienne Rich'in "ancak annesi güçlüyse kızı da güçlü bir anne olabilir" argümanını destekler. Dolaysıyla tez, Phillips'in *The Final Passage* romanında Leila ve annesini, *The Lost Child*'da ise Monica ve annesi Ruth'un ilişkilerini bu kavram aracılığıyla inceler. Böylece bu kavram, romanlardaki anne ve kızların güçlenme(me) olasılıklarına bakarak aralarındaki ilişkileri belirlemede de faydalı olmuştur.

Üçüncü bölüm, romanların analizi ile devam eder ve ilk olarak Caryl Phillips'in ilk romanı *The Final Passage* ve bu romandaki çoğul (Karayipli) ana karakterlerini inceler. Bu bölüm, Phillips'in bu kültürdeki annelerin yaygın temsilinin aksine, bu romanda yalnızca güçlü Karayipli anne figürlerini sunmadığını iddia eder. Phillips, böylece adanın gizemli, güçlü, süper Siyahi kadın ve anne figürlerini sorunsallaştırır ve çoğul anne karakterlerini emperyalizmin, göçün, ırk ve sınıf eşitsizliklerinin zorlu koşulları içinde sunar. Ardından bu bölüm, Phillips'in *siyasetten arındırma, idealleştirme* ve *normalleştirme* varsayımlarını çürüttüğünü öne sürer. Karakterleri Leila, annesi ve Beverley'i emperyalizm sonrası, göç, ırk ayrımcılığı ve sınıf eşitsizliklerinin "ideal olmayan" koşulları ve bağlamlarında konumlandırarak, Phillips önce *idealleştirme* varsayımını yapıbozuma uğratır, çünkü romanında bu tür zorlu koşullardaki annelerden ideal beklentilerin imkânsız ve anlamsız olduğunu oldukça gerçekçi bir şekilde gösterir. Bölüm, bu tür tasvirler yoluyla, sömürgecilik sonrası adada emperyalizmin zorluklarını ve travmalarını sunarak, Phillips'in anneliğin

siyasetten arındırma varsayımını yapıbozuma uğrattığını da ileri sürer. Bunun yerine, annelik pratiğinin, anneliğin yaşandığı toprakların politik statükosundan ne kadar önemli ölçüde etkilenebileceğini gösterir. Dahası, Leila ve annesinin tasvirleri aracılığıyla, sömürgecilik gibi politik ve kapitalist varlıkların bir anne ve kızı arasındaki ilişkiyi ve onların benlik ve kadınlık kimliğini yaratmalarını nasıl olumsuz etkileyebileceğini de gösterir.

Bölüm ayrıca, Leila, onun annesi ve Beverley aracılığıyla, Phillips'in *normalleşmeyi* çürüttüğünü, çünkü bu üç annenin evlerinin ve çocuklarının sorumluluğunu kendi başlarına yaşadıkları evlerinde tek başına üstlendiklerini iddia eder. Böylece Phillips, anneliğin *normalleşmenin* savunduğu gibi sadece çekirdek aileye özgü olmadığını gösterir. Aksine, roman gösteriyor ki, Karayipler gibi toplumlarda köleliğin bir izi olarak kadınlar tarafından yönetilen evler yaygındır. Böylece Phillips, sömürgecilik sonrası topraklarda sömürgeciliğin nasıl etkiler bıraktığını ön plana çıkarır. Kölelik sonrası bu sistemden bir şekilde güçlü çıkan ve kendi hanelerini yönetebilen kadınları yüceltmek yerine, Phillips anlatımında bu kadınların/annelerin mücadelelerini ve karşılaştıkları sorunları açığa çıkarır. Böylece, bu anne karakterlerin kendilerine bakmak için yeterli fırsatları olmadığında, ailelerinin tüm yükünü tek başlarına üstlendikleri zorlukları vurgular. Bununla birlikte, Phillips'in romanı, örneğin Leila ve Beverley'nin birer anne olarak kadınlıktansa annelik kimliklerinin daha güçlü olduklarını gösterir.

Bunlara ilaveten, bu bölüm, Phillips'in Leila, annesi, Beverley ve Millie ile çeşitli annelik pratikleri ve dolayısıyla da çoğul annelik figürleri sergilediğini öne sürer.

Phillips, romandaki diğer annelerin aksine Millie'yi, annelerin çoğulluğuna katkı sağlayan ve gücüyle alternatif bir Karayip anne figürü olarak sunar. Bununla birlikte, Millie daha istikrarlı bir ekonomik durumla güçlü bir anne simgesi olarak temsil edildiği için, bu temsil romandaki Öteki anne karakterlerin zorluklarını vurgular. Çünkü diğer anneler Millie'nin sahip olduğu stabil ekonomik güce dolayısıyla onun sahip olduğu güçlenmeye sahip değildir. Buna ek olarak, Phillips'in baba karakterleri Michael ve Bradeth'in tasvirleri, onun Karayipli çoğul anne tasvirlerine benzer şekilde babalığın çoğulluğunu da vurgular; bununla birlikte, bu babaların sosyal sınıfının ve ekonomik durumunun bu figürlerin babalık pratiğinde önemli unsurlar olduğunu da ima eder. Son olarak analizlerinde bu bölüm, bu baba karakterlerin annelerin hayatlarında ataerkil ve psikolojik yükü artırdıklarını öne sürer.

Dördüncü bölüm, Phillips'in son romanlarından biri olan *The Lost Child*'daki "başarısız" anne temsillerine odaklanır. Bölüm, Phillips'in dezavantajlı zaman ve mekânlarda "işlevsiz" Öteki anne karakterleri yaratarak, bu annelerin çocuklarına annelik yapmaları gerektiği halde bunu yapamayacakları sosyal, ekonomik ve politik koşulları vurguladığını iddia eder. Bu şekilde, Phillips'in bu romanda da normatif annelik kavramlarını, *doğallaştırma, idealleştirme* ve *siyasetten arındırma,* yapıbozuma uğrattığını ileri sürer. Phillips bu romanda, köle gemileri tarafından en çok ziyaret edilen liman olan on sekizinci yüzyıl Liverpool'unda fahişelikten başka bir şey seçeneği olmayan dolayısıyla da bedensel köleliği hâlâ devam eden fakat aslında özgürleşmiş köle bir anneyi karakterize eder. Bunun yanı sıra resmettiği başka bir anne karakter, Monica, Oxford ve Leeds'in yirminci yüzyılında, iki melez oğluyla birlikte işçi sınıfından bir anne olarak ve toplum tarafından ciddi bir biçimde dışlanarak

romanda yerini alır. Ki Monica'nın resmedildiği tarih 1960lar böyle bir anne karakterin ikinci dalga feminizm gibi birçok karşı kültür hareketleri ve özgürlük eylemleriyle özgürleştirilmesi gerektiği bir dönemdir. Fakat romanda açıkça görülür ki bu özgürlük eylemleri Monica ve onun melez çocukları gibi Ötekiler için hiç de özgürleşme sağlamamıştır. Karakterlerini, böyle zaman ve mekânlarda konumlandırarak, Phillips apaçık bir şekilde anneliğin *siyasetten arındırılması* sanısını çürütür ve anneliği açıkça politize edilmiş ortamlarda politik bir kimlik olarak konumlandırır.

Romanlarında, bu tür konumların kullanılması, anneliğin *idealleştirilmesini* de yapıbozuma uğratmaktadır, çünkü bu konumlar annelerin kendileri yüzünden değil de anneliklerini gerçekleştirdikleri koşullar nedeniyle ideal olarak annelik yapmalarının mümkün olmadığını ve bunun beklenmemesi gerektiğini açıkça ortaya koyar. Son olarak, Phillips, Monica aracılığıyla, *doğallaştırmanın* oldukça normatif ve anlamsız bir varsayım olduğunu gösterir, çünkü Monica, içinde bulunduğu en sıkıntılı koşullar yerine hep bir birey olarak kendini suçlar ve durmadan anne olmaya uygunluğunu sorgular. Fakat, roman bir bölümünde Monica'nın anlatımına onun sesinden ve bakış açısıyla yer vererek *anaerkil anlatımı* başarır. Bu anlatımında Monica, kendi yorucu ve zorluklarla dolu tecrübelerini ve dışlanmalarını anlatır ve kendisini muhtemel eleştirilere karşı savunabileceği bir sese sahip olur. Böylece Monica yalnızca üzerine yorum yapılan ve eleştirilen "nesne" anne konumundan çıkıp "özne" olan bir anneye dönüşür. Bu tez de bu anlatımı Phillips'in anneleri yazımında ve tasvirinde bir başarı olarak ele alır.

Monica’nın Leeds'te işçi sınıfından bir anne karakteri olması da Sara Ruddick'in tanımladığı *annelik pratiğini* sorunsallaştırır. Monica’nın ekonomik, psikolojik ve sosyal konumu, bu tür bir pratiği kendi sorunları yüzünden değil toplumun ve sosyal sınıfların yarattığı sorunlar ve etiketlemeler sonucu gerçekleştiremeyeceğini gösterir. Bu sebeptendir ki, Monica gibi bir anne karakter, bu tür *annelik pratiği* beklentilerinin evrenselleşmesine ve gelenekselleştirilmesine karşı bir duruş olarak var olur; bu nedenle, Öteki annelerin varlığının bir hatırlatıcısıdır. Bu bölüm, bir de Monica ve annesi Ruth'un ilişkisini, Ruth'un güçsüz/boyun eğen bir anne olması ve Monica'nın onun gibi olmamak için ondan kaçması dolayısıyla bir matrofobi örneği olarak yorumlar. Bu nedenle, bu ikinci romanla Phillips, çoğul, “işlevsiz” ve Öteki anne tasvirlerine, önceden kölen olan on sekizinci yüzyıl Liverpool’unda bir anne ve İngiltere’nin kuzeyinde işçi sınıfından 1960’larda melez çocuklarıyla dışlanan bir anne ekleyerek çoğul bir şekilde resmettiği Öteki annelik tasvirlerini daha da çeşitlendirir. Bunu yaparak da okuyucuları hem normatif annelik algılarını sorgulamaya iter hem de bu annelerin varlığını vurgulayarak bu normları ve okuyucuyu “rahatsız edici” ve düşündürücü tasvirler sunmuş olur. Son olarak bölüm, romandaki baba karakterleri inceler ve *The Final Passage*’ta da olduğu gibi burada da çoğul fakat daha baskıcı, ataerkil ve bencil baba karakterler olduğunu iddia eder. Bu tür karakterle de Phillips’in anne karakterlerinin karşılaştığı baskıları, yalnızlıkları ve ezilmelerini daha yoğun bir şekilde gözler önüne serer.

Sonuç olarak, bu tez, Caryl Phillips'in annelik tasvirlerini, anneliğin ve kadınlığın üzerindeki baskıları anlamak ve yıkmak için önemli bir başlangıç noktası olduğu inancıyla analiz eder. Bu nedenle, Phillips'in yazmanın siyasi bir eylem olduğu ve

kendisinin “eylemdeki çoğulluk” anlayışından yola çıkar ve güç alır. Bu nedenle, Phillips'in tüm çoğulluklarıyla zorlu koşullarda Öteki annelik(ler) tasvirleri, annelik kimliğinin normatif bir biçimde evrenselleştirilmesinin ve idealleştirilmesinin uygun olmadığı üzerine çıkarımlarıyla büyük önem taşır. Böylesine bir önem aynı zamanda, annelik ve annelik tasvirlerinin analizlerinin kadınların üzerindeki baskıları anlamak ve bu baskıları yıkmak adına sosyal ve politik değişimler için yol açar. Phillips'in kendine özgü temsilleri ve empatik tasvirleriyle okuyucuları bu normları sorgulamaya nasıl çağırdığı da önemli olmuştur. Dolayısıyla bu tez, Phillips'in sosyal, politik ve ekonomik yüklü anne tasvirleriyle annelik anlayışlarının “maskesini açığa çıkarmayı” amaçladığını iddia eder.

Öte yandan, bu tez, Phillips'in iki romanında “çoğul” anne figürleri sunduğunu öne sürse de bu romanlar, tümüyle çoğul anneleri kapsayabilmiş değildir. Örneğin, lezbiyen anneler veya “engelli” anneler gibi daha birçok Öteki anne temsilleri ve analizleri bu tez kapsamına dahil olmamıştır. O halde bu tezin kapsamı, Caryl Phillips'in sadece iki romanındaki, *The Final Passage* ve *The Lost Child*, anne karakterleriyle sınırlıdır. Dolayısıyla da bu tez tümüyle annelerin “çoğulluğunu” yakaladığını ve analiz ettiğini ima etmez ya da bu argümanları Phillips'in tüm yapıtı ve yazımı üzerine genellemez. Netice olarak, bu tez Phillips'in tüm yapıtlarını analiz etmek için daha kapsamlı bir çalışma yapma çağrısında bulunur ve bu tür bir çalışma için gerekli zemini sağlar. Böylece, bu tür daha kapsamlı bir çalışma, bu tez boyunca dayandırılan analiz ve iddia edilen argümanlara dayandırılarak yürütülebilir.

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The Other Mothers in Caryl Phillips's Novels

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