Longing for Love: Eros and National Belonging in Three Novels by Rayda Jacobs

Abstract:
The female Muslim descendant of Cape slavery is a key figure in the work of South African writer, Rayda Jacobs. Three of her novels, in particular, seem to track the social and political genealogy of the female Muslim descendant of slaves, namely, *Eyes of the Sky* (1996), *The Slave Book* (1998), and *Sachs Street* (2001). These novels trace, through the subjectivity of the female Muslim slave, the emergence of the South African nation from its origins at the Cape, through the hinterland, to its contemporary borders. The novels foreground the personal relationship of romantic love, which, of all the personal relationships, is the most volatile and dynamic, producing unexpected transformations. Love, which produces a child from the erotic encounter in *Eyes of the Sky*, and social union through marriage in *The Slave Book*, is presented as having the potential to transcend racial, class and religious boundaries in the colonial state. We see in the declining apartheid state presented in the third novel, *Sachs Street*, that the national allegorical potential of eros finally is not fully realised, leading to a reconceptualisation of romantic love in a transnational frame, centred nonetheless in Cape Town, South Africa. As much as these novels are historical, since they are written post-1994 reflecting the contemporary concerns of its author, they present a singular vision of the place of the female Muslim descendant of slaves in the South African nation, where the postcolonial nation is implicitly conceptualised as a white dominated derivative European nation-state.

Keywords: romantic love, national allegory, South African literature, Islam, slavery, feminism, Rayda Jacobs

Rayda Jacobs is a South African writer who, enviably, has achieved the ambition desired by most authors – popular success and literary recognition. Born in Cape Town in 1947, she grew up in the upheavals of the early years of apartheid social reconstruction, which saw her family uprooted from their home in Diep River, a suburb declared white in terms of the Group Areas Act. As an ambitious young woman of colour struggling to find a career with some possibility of advancement, Jacobs obtained a white ID card to allow her to train at a white secretarial college. Threatened with arrest when her "crime" was discovered, Jacobs emigrated in 1968 to Canada, where she married an Iranian man with whom she had two children, and, following her divorce from him, she then married an Egyptian living in

Canada. Even though Toronto proved fairly hospitable to this South African diasporic, Jacobs has always considered South Africa, and Cape Town in particular, to be her home and the source of her artistic inspiration. Although her first publication, the short story cycle titled *The Middle Children* (1994), was written in Canada, most of the stories are set in South Africa. This first collection carries the hallmarks of Jacobs's subsequent fiction, including a very strong autobiographical element, where Jacobs, like most writers, aesthetically transforms her own lived experience. Jacobs returned to South Africa the year after the publication of her short stories. Her subsequent novels and short story collections, including *Eyes of the Sky* (1996), *The Slave Book* (1998), *Sachs Street* (2001), *Confessions of a Gambler* (2003), *Postcards from South Africa* (2004), *My Father's Orchid* (2006) and *Joonie* (2011) are all, for the most part, set in South Africa. Jacobs won the coveted Herman Charles Bosman prize for her first novel, *Eyes of the Sky*, but it was the controversial *Confessions of a Gambler* that catapulted Jacobs to popular and literary celebrity for its powerful presentation of the inner life – the desires and contradictions – of a Muslim woman with a gambling addiction. *Confessions* won Jacobs a second Herman Charles Bosman award, and, in addition, the even more lucrative and popularly prestigious *Sunday Times* Fiction Prize. The popularity of this novel was such that there were waiting lists for borrowing it at local public libraries in the communities about whom Jacobs writes (Jacobs 2008b, 276-77). Jacobs went on to do the script for, direct and star in a film adaptation of *Confessions*, which won South African Film and Television Golden Horn Awards for Best Achievement in Script in a Feature Film, and Best Supporting Actress, in 2009. Apart from her fiction and feature film, Jacobs has also published a travelogue, *Mecca Diaries*, and an autobiography, *Masquerade*, as well as producing the documentary films *God Has Many Names*, and *Portrait of Muslim Women*. Along with resounding popular success, Jacobs's novels and life writing have also generated much scholarly interest amongst significant South African and international literary scholars on questions of minority identity (Aumeerally 2017; Kruger 2003; Marais & Stobie 2018), representations of Islam in fiction (Kearney 2006; Roos 2005), colonialism and slavery (Kasembeli 2021; Olaussen 2011; Smith 2016; Wenzel 2004), and gender in South African pilgrimage narratives (Baderoon 2012).

A consideration of Jacobs's oeuvre makes it clear that her overwhelming preoccupations have been with South African national identity, minority South African

coloured[1] identity, Islam as a formative influence in the South African nation; and the ways in which Muslim female descendants of slaves, in particular, negotiate these different subject positions. As already noted, the setting of virtually all Jacobs's fiction and films is South Africa, and she presents an insider's view of the coloured identities of Cape Town, focalised significantly through female Muslim perspectives. Inasmuch as growing up in the coloured townships of Cape Town was central to Jacobs's formation, so too was growing up Muslim in Cape Town. Although Jacobs's paternal grandfather was Jewish, her grandparents had not been married, and Islam remained the exclusive faith of Jacobs's extended family on both sides. In *Masquerade*, Jacobs recounts her experience of her maternal family's strict interpretation of the codes of conduct and daily life of a Muslim, alongside the rather more relaxed religious outlook of her paternal grandparents. Jacobs herself moves from rebellion against the perceived constraints of a Muslim lifestyle in her youth, to a renewed respect for, and understanding of, Islamic spirituality when she is threatened with losing her daughter after a near-fatal car accident in Toronto (Jacobs 2008b, 157-158). In an interview, she sums up her experience as follows: "My fight with God started before kindergarten. I had a deep love for God, and vacillated between my more permissive grandparents and my God-fearing grandparents with their strictness. I'm not just talking about pushing the envelope. I've been challenging God all the way yet am deeply, privately devoted to God" (Lehman 2010, 14). Underscoring her personal conflict, Jacobs suggests further: "I know God loves me because I am not a bad person. I just have this ongoing dual struggle going on inside me sometimes" (Lehman 2010, 15). In the context of post-9/11 Islamophobia, Jacobs's consciousness of her identity as primarily shaped by religious identity is additionally foregrounded, and is an important motivation for the novel *Confessions of a Gambler*:

> The whole idea of doing *Confessions* as a novel and then as a film was to tell those of you, the non-Muslim community, whoever you are, whatever the country. This is who we are. We don't have AK-47S under our burqas. We are the same as you; we love our kids. We love movies. We love art. We love to dance. We love to play the slot machines. I don't think we have special DNA, you know. Women cover up because they want to, not because their men tell them to do so. We have the same

[1] The term "coloured" has been used in this essay, cognisant that it is a complex, socially constructed identifier which has been both imposed by apartheid racial categories, and claimed by people who culturally identify by this designation. Rather than the racial classification signalled by the upper case, "Coloured", the lower-case use of the term signals its use by the people so described.

> problems with our men as you have. And don't think we are walking in the shadows of our men. We are not! (Lehman 2010, 16).

Like Leila Aboulela, the Sudanese-Scottish writer, Jacobs interprets the world, and motivates her narratives, from the position of a committed, practising Muslim, unlike Hanif Kureishi and Salman Rushdie, for example, who are familiar with Islamic culture, but who are not motivated by faith. Jacobs brings these preoccupations together through the prism of Islam as experienced and interpreted especially by Muslim women of the community historically associated with the origins of South African Islam at the Cape in the seventeenth century.

An overview of Jacobs's work suggests further that she explores questions of national, minority, religious and gender identity through the minutiae of personal relationships. Thus, it is through the "small" politics of individual relationships that "big" national and other identity politics play themselves out. In her autobiography, Jacobs comments on the common critique from socially and politically conscious readers that her fiction is insufficiently (overtly) political. She refers to the criticism of a journalist friend at the *Muslim Views*, a Cape Town-based community newspaper, after publication of *Confessions of a Gambler*, that the novel did not sufficiently expose the discriminatory apartheid context which shaped the central character's identity and personality: "Where is the political context for *Confessions of a Gambler*? What shaped Abeeda [the heroine of the novel]? What made her the woman she is? Don't tell me its fiction and you're not writing a political book" (Jacobs 2008b, 119). Jacobs responds by suggesting through her own life experience how politics implicitly and deeply informs almost every aspect of one's existence, especially in a society that has been socially engineered by race. She sums up the paradox by saying, "I didn't think to write about politics because it was so much a part of me. You grow up with it; you don't question it, can't look at it objectively: you're in the forest and can't see the trees" (Jacobs 2008b, 119). For this reason, Jacob's fiction puts the granularity of personal relationships, rather than exposure of apartheid-capitalist iniquities, or stories about the anti-apartheid political movement, in focus. Jacobs's narratives track individual subjectivities as they are enmeshed with other lives – the lives of parents and children, of siblings, of friends and of neighbours in local communities. A relationship which stands out as being especially charged in Jacobs's art is the relationship of romantic love, the personal relationship which, together with friendship, may, and most often does, cross lines of kinship relations. Eros is a form of love, unique in its inescapable connection with sexual desire. It is

the association of love with sexual desire which gives eros its fundamental instability, its volatility and dynamism. The dynamism of romantic love is reflected in English in the language of love, which suggests movement – "to fall in love". "Falling in love" suggests also the unpredictability and inevitability of love, a truly irrational passion which challenges borders and boundaries – and defies common sense. Romantic love, of all the personal relationships, for this reason, is linked with venturing into the unknown, the forbidden, crossing the lines that divide, and so doing, producing new unities. Eros thus is a lightning rod in forging new communities, most significantly, the "imagined community" of the nation, to use Benedict Anderson's apt expression for the transformed affiliations of the Westphalian nation state, which has come to represent the dominant international model of the nation.

The significance of romantic love to the political discourse of the modern nation state has been theorised by Doris Sommer. Sommer's groundbreaking study, *Foundational Fictions: The National Romances of Latin America*, identifies, in the context of a surfeit of romance novels in the literatures of nineteenth-century South American nations coming into being, an "erotics of politics" (1993, 6). Romance and republic were brought together, Sommer claims, when "novel national ideals … ostensibly grounded in 'natural' heterosexual love" produced "marriages that provided a figure for apparently nonviolent consolidation" (1993, 6). Romance narratives thus brought together opposing parties in nations, which, in order to establish themselves as imagined territorially defined communities, had to forge unities across lines of race, class, and religion. The "domestic romance" represented by the novels, furthermore, is an "exhortation to be fruitful and multiply" (1993, 6), capturing the generative possibility of children born in the heterosexual, patriarchal family constituted by romance, which overlaps with the progress and development narratives of modern nation states. The romances Sommer studies are mainly written by members of national elites, with political investments in the national project. While the Latin-American romances suggest one particularly optimistic form that an erotics of politics might take, it alerts us also to reworkings of that form in the national cultures of other geographies and periods.

What is the valency of romantic love in the national longings of the South African Muslim woman, who is the descendant of slaves? Jacobs's artistic engagement of this question is presented, in particular, through three connected novels, namely, *Eyes of the Sky*, *The Slave Book* and *Sachs Street*. These three novels are linked by a genealogy which may be tracked back to an Afrikaner man and an indigenous Sonqua woman in the hinterland of the Cape. This is the story told in *Eyes of the Sky*. It is a story of love between the settler and indigene where marriage is a social impossibility, and the illegitimate child born of the

physical union is raised white. *The Slave Book* shifts the tale one generation down the line, and moves from the hinterland to the Cape Colony. The second novel is focalised through the community of slaves at a wine farm, but foregrounds, especially, the life of a Muslim slave girl. When the son of the Sonqua woman and Dutch farmer is employed as a manager on the farm, he falls in love with the slave girl – a relationship where marriage between the "white" slave master and the Muslim slave woman is presented as a very happy, but short-lived, narrative possibility, since the bride is widowed soon after the marriage. *Sachs Street* features a Muslim female protagonist, a non-citizen of apartheid South Africa in the 1980s, who, like her slave forebear, falls in love with a white, Christian man, but is unwilling to marry him since he refuses to embrace her faith. What is remarkable about the family saga presented in these three novels is the centrality and power of romantic love, and religious faith in the latter two works, which distinguish these novels from many other South African literary works about intimate relations which highlight love across predominantly racial lines. Cross-racial love, along with sexual violence and miscegenation, are tropes that occur in literatures about South Africa from the earliest source in the Adamastor myth in Luiz Vaz de Camões's, *The Lusíads*, through to novels by William Plomer, Peter Abrahams, André Brink, Nadine Gordimer, J.M Coetzee, Achmat Dangor, Farida Karodia and others. Virtually without exception, where love, rather than rape and miscegenation, is the concern of the narratives, the romantic relationships presented end tragically in disillusionment and death. Rayda Jacobs's oeuvre presents possibly the most optimistic of these South African literary representations of love, but, in the final analysis, even here love fails in its potential to unite the nation across the lines of race mainly foregrounded in the narratives. The concept of the nation, furthermore, assumed in Jacobs's fiction is the modern nation-state originating out of the competing interests of European colonial powers in Southern Africa. In *The Slave Book*, the middle novel studied, the romance comes closest to its uniting and transformative potential since the putatively white slave master, in embracing Islam to marry the slave woman, crosses a fundamental epistemological line with potential symbolically to transform the nation envisaged. This quiet revolution is, however, short-lived, since the hero is killed by the forces which entrench racism, abuse and exploitation. *Sachs Street*, the final novel in this "genealogy series", reverts to the ambiguous origins of representations of cross-racial intimate relations in South Africa oscillating between love and hate, and care and violence. Here there is a consequent shift to a transnational contemplation of love, influenced also by rising international Islamophobia, since the inclusion of the Muslim female descendant of slaves in a South African nation identified as white-dominant even post-1994 cannot be

imagined. That potential inclusion of the Muslim female descendant of slaves may be negotiated only through the romance plot in Jacobs's project is testimony both to the socially constructed relative powerlessness of such women but, ambivalently, also the power of love. The negotiation of inclusion in the three novels studied originates in *Eyes of the Sky*, a novel where the Muslim female descendant of slaves does not feature, but which tracks her genealogy back to South African first people.

Eyes of the Sky: Myths of National Origin

Eyes of the Sky is not a story about a Muslim woman, but it is a story that traces back to the colonial history of the South African nation, the autochthony of the female Muslim descendant of slaves. This is the only one of Jacobs's fictions that is set in a part of South Africa that is not the Cape littoral, with its fluid mix of temporary seafaring population, settlers and indigenous nomadic pastoralists. Instead, the action of this novel plays out against the semi-desert Karoo landscape of the Hantam, where a hardy Afrikaner patriarch, Harman Kloot, ekes out an existence from the arid soil of his farm, Kloot's Nek. Harman's son, Roeloff, (known to the farmhands as Eyes of the Sky) who, unlike his elder brother, has a respectful regard for the local Sonqua, falls in love with a beautiful Sonqua girl, Zokho, also known as Smoke in the Eyes: "Smoke in the Eyes. He liked that name. It suited her soft, slanted eyes. He'd thought all Sonqua were craggy with stained teeth, like Twa [the Kloot farmhand], but she was a creature of beauty, with the smoothness and colour of a bronze sun, the most exquisite female he had ever seen" (1996, 16). As the relationship develops over time, it is clear that the attraction is not only physical since "[t]here was something that he [Roeloff] liked about Zokho, much more than her physical beauty and her innocence" (1996, 105). What we see in this affirmation of a connection which moves beyond the physical, is the conviction, clear in most love narratives, that the uniqueness of the beloved promotes the lover's self-actualisation. The attraction between Roeloff and Zokho is mutual, and Zokho loves Roeloff even though he "is the son of the man who killed [her] people" (1996, 105). Zokho is willing to sacrifice her dignity and pride in their small prejudiced community in order to be with Roeloff; "I will go where you go. Be your shadow" (1996, 105). The narrative cannot, however, realistically accommodate the possibility of the marriage of Roeloff and Zokho. Zokho later gives birth to, and abandons, their son, whom Roeloff names Harman after his father, the progenitor of this "Africaander" family line. Even though Zokho leaves her infant to return to her own people, she "lives on" in the lovechild, Harman (1996, 190). Roeloff then marries the Afrikaner woman, Neeltje, who raises Harman as her own

child, effectively integrating him into the white community. (The next novel, *The Slave Book*, which continues Harman's story, implies the source of his cultural openness to his hybrid roots.) Thus, even though the love of Roeloff and Zokho is not socially validated in marriage, what triumphs in *Eyes of the Sky* is the passion between the coloniser and the indigene, which exists as an apotheosised romance, living on and performing its transformative work in the lovechild, Harman.

The plot of Jacobs's novel also takes a number of tropes of South African national origin and spins them out differently, differences made livable because of love. Miscegenation, a term which implies racism in its suggestion of sullied interbreeding, has been a term associated both with Afrikaner society and coloured communities. In a past political era, where establishing the myth of a racially pure Afrikaner nation was imperative, the origins of many leading Afrikaner families in mixed unions was furtively hidden from sight. A later post-1994 era, which privileges African indigeneity, has seen a rewriting of Afrikaner histories to incorporate Khoisan mothers. This is a trope that emerges in the writing of Afrikaans author, André Brink, especially in the novel *Devil's Valley*. But while Brink's narratives imbricate sex and procreation with hatred and violence in this originary moment, love in Jacobs's story transforms miscegenation into a socially generative possibility.

Miscegenation in South African political discourse has been disproportionately linked with coloured identities, the communities among which all of Jacobs's novels are set. Grant Farred remarks on the negative interpretations which have been attached to hybridity in South African politics where the truly original autochthony of "quintessential South Africans" has been nationally marginalised. Hybridity in this context has been read as

> a sign of difference, of racial, cultural, and ideological impurity; a marker of alienation, hybridity is not read as a measure of integration into (and centrality to) the nation. . . . Racial impurity does not so much disqualify as it signifies a perpetual symbolic disenfranchisement, a marginalization that cannot be transcended. No South African community is better versed in the vagaries and contradictions of the politics of the impure than coloureds. (2000, 8)

Miscegenation within coloured communities has also disproportionately been attached to women rather than men with a "gendered notion of (sexual) shame attached to coloured identity" (Moolla 2020, 167). Both novelist Zoë Wicomb and sociologist Zmitri Erasmus point to the ways in which concupiscence projected onto women identified as coloured has

produced an unspoken aura of shame. Jacobs's novels attempt to re-script these myths of national origins through romantic love. Questions of concupiscence and shame cannot attach to Zokho in *Eyes of the Sky* since the mutual affection between the Afrikaner and Sonqua lovers is so pronounced. It is even less conceivable to identify the heroine of Jacobs's next novel, which continues the family history, as concupiscent or shameful.

Embracing Faith, Embracing Love in *The Slave Book*

Of the three novels studied, *The Slave Book* is the novel which follows the lines of the classic romance novel most closely. This novel is set on a wine farm in the Cape Colony, shortly before abolition in 1834. It tells the story of a very attractive young girl slave, Somiela, the daughter of Noria of Malabar, and either a French or German sailor who raped her. Noria subsequently marries Sangora Salamah of Java, who fully embraces the role of father to Somiela. The family is split up when they are sold, with Noria working for a doctor in Cape Town, and Sangora and Somiela bought by the owner of Zoetewater, the wine farm in the countryside where most of the action occurs. As soon as Somiela arrives at the farm, she excites the interest of the men, both master and slave, and the jealousy of the mistress and her daughters. To spite Somiela, the mistress orders Somiela's beautiful, long, brown hair to be cut off; but this only seems to enhance the young girl's attractiveness. She is courted by two of the slaves, at Zoetewater: Arend, a mixed-race slave, the son of Rachel the older slave woman at the estate, who had been taken advantage of and betrayed by a Frenchman; and Salie, a handsome Indonesian slave who, of the two, seems most smitten. Salie's chances are scuppered, however, when Harman Kloot arrives on the farm, sent there by his father to escape the revenge of boer farmers, whose attempt to kill a group of Sonqua and enslave their children, Harman had thwarted. The attraction between Somiela and Harman is instant and Harman resolves to work for free for Andries de Villers, the owner of Zoetewater, until he has bought Somiela's freedom. The plan is unsettled when De Villiers tries to seduce Somiela, and his wife scalds her with boiling water in her fury on discovering the betrayal. When Sangora shoots at the slave mistress in anger, Harman helps Sangora escape rather than face the punishment of death. Sangora then fakes a suicide, allowing him to return later under a false name, and resume his life at the Cape after the abolition of slavery. Sangora is the narrator who tells Somiela's story at Zoetewater, and then, later, her story at the Hantam, when she marries Harman, and then finally back at the Cape when she marries Salie.

Much more than *Eyes of the Sky,* the architecture of *The Slave Book* is that of the classic romance plot. Scholarship on the romance plot is copious, but studies generally identify the following elements as essential, namely, the context which allows the meeting of the heroine and hero, but which at the same time presents a social background whose prejudices need to be overcome; the recognition of an attraction between the lovers, specific obstacles to the union, and the removal of impediments which allows the final union, usually, but not always, in marriage (Regis 2007, 30-39).

The context in which the lovers, Somiela and Harman, find themselves in *The Slave Book* is a racist slave-owning society where the heroine is a "half-breed" slave, and the hero is a putatively white member of the slave-owning class. The society is one that unofficially permits the sexual violation of slave women by white men, a practice implicitly encouraged for its "production" of mixed-race children who bolster slave numbers, and so increase the property of the slave master. Mixed race girl-children, in particular, are prized for their exotic good looks, which make them attractive to white men, further fueling the cycle of violation and ownership. In this context, the heroine, Somiela, is rightly suspicious of the intentions of the hero Harman. This is also a society which would totally abjure the romantic relationship and marriage of the heroine and hero, since their union would cross the boundaries of race, class, and, in this case, religion, upon which the hierarchical order of the community is based. The essential elements of this context are neatly summed up in the novel in an exchange between Salie, the slave who also is attracted to Somiela, and her stepfather Sangora, when Salie realises that the personal odds are stacked against him for Somiela's affections. Salie remonstrates with Sangora that he should not encourage the relationship with Harman since Harman is not only white, but also a Christian. Sangora, recognising that Somiela is smitten by Harman and would not (at that time) be persuaded to settle for Salie, reminds Salie that as a Christian, Harman is "people of the Book" (1998, 132), which gives him sufficient moral and spiritual closeness to Somiela for the differences not to count too strongly. Salie trenchantly points out the irony of the situation where it is precisely people like Harman who perpetuate their continued oppression: "Who do you think locks us up at night? Don't be so naïve, Sangora. It's people of the Book!" (1998, 132). Thus, for the more combative Salie, Sangora's accepting Harman as suitor for his stepdaughter is merely a perpetuation of the inequalities and injustices which exist in the Cape slave-owning colony.

This is the strongly prejudicial context into which the heroine and hero are inserted. The heroine and hero embody the perfect romantic couple, who seem to be meant for each other. Throughout the pages where the reader is introduced to the nubile, sixteen-year-old

Somiela, her beauty, striking since it blends the aesthetic ideals of different racial types, is repeatedly emphasised. The initial view of Somiela is one filtered through the gaze of Andries de Villiers, the owner of Zoetewater, who is purchasing slaves from the new lot on the market. He immediately notices Somiela, "an astonishingly beautiful girl", against the backdrop of her mother and father, also on the slave block. What makes Somiela especially attractive is her mixing of racial phenotypes: "The girl was not the same hue as her mother, and had a tawny complexion, with green eyes and brown hair; a half-breed" (1998, 16). Somiela's value as a slave, increased by her beauty, makes her an object of desire, which pushes up her price at the auction. But, as Gabeba Baderoon reminds us: [t]he image of the physically alluring Muslim woman" served also "to rationalise and obscure sexual violence" (2014, 85). Andries's covetousness of Somiela's beauty, which will emerge later to spur the plot forward, leads him to outbid the competition, taking Somiela home at a very high price. The narrative, reflecting the historical sources on which it is based, identifies slaves by their places of origin. So Noria is Noria of Malabar, and Sangora is Sangora of Java. By contrast, Somiela is repeatedly referred to in the novel as "Somiela van de Kaap" (1998, 17), an appellation which entrenches her indigeneity through her conception at the Cape, by a mother and father who have different racial and national origins, estranging her from their native lands, and making the Cape her only home – the uniquely novel autochthony to which Farred, cited earlier, refers. Similarly, in Harman, Jacobs creates the ideal romantic hero, but, in addition, creates the ideal hero for the South African Muslim woman who is the descendant of slaves. Like Somiela, Harman represents a highly desirous ideal of manhood, and is attractive to both slave mistresses and slave women. When Harman first comes to Zoetewater, it is clear that his physical appeal makes him attractive to Elspeth, Andries's daughter who is betrothed to Martinus, Harman's brother who has come to take up the position of magistrate at the Cape. Elspeth is intrigued by Harman's looks, which are as exotic as Somiela's: "[Harman] was tall like Martinus, bronzed by the sun, with a tassel of platinum hair tied back with a leather cord. She had never seen a man with hair past his shoulders, and never one with such eyes. But it wasn't only the colour. There was a flatness to them, an oriental slant that made the greyness unnatural" (1998, 73). Elspeth thrills to Harman throughout the dinner the families have together, but her desire turns to jealousy when she finds "him looking at the half-breed [Somiela serving at the table] in a way totally unbecoming for a white man" (1998, 75). It is evident throughout the novel that Somiela is attracted to Harman more than she is to any of her other suitors. That Harman perfectly fits the bill of the romantic hero is clear towards the end of the novel, when, for the first time,

Somiela succumbs to her seduction: "She had seen Andries de Villiers without clothes; an old wildebeest, wide around the girth, flabby, glutinous, … This was a magnificent body – hard flanks, strong legs, and … her eyes feasted on him until she forced them away" (1998, 247, first ellipsis added). But Harman is more than just strikingly handsome and virile; he also has an innate sense of justice through recognition of common humanity, and a natural inclination for the ethos of Islam. When he first arrives at Zoetewater, Harman sees Somiela treading grapes as punishment for a misdemeanour. It is clear that with her skirts up, she is the focus of attention of the slavemasters and slaves. This leads to the comment from Andries that concupiscence, what comes naturally to the slaves, is not a bad idea since it produces children, which is in the material interests of slave owners. Harman flinches at this remark, showing his concern for Somiela, but, more generally, for the brutality of the lack of humanity of the practice of slavery.

The Slave Book, unlike other novels about slavery at the Cape, including André Brink's *Philida*, Therese Benadé's *Kites of Good Fortune*, Yvette Christiansë's *Confessions*, and Maxine Case's *The Softness of the Lime*, is a story about the specific significance of Islam in the South African nation, which develops from its first origins at the Cape, and whose borders later considerably expand northwards. The importance of Islam as one of the first assertions of epistemological difference and resistance to racism is most significantly carried through the character of Sangora, whose discipline, dignity, strength, wisdom and fellow-feeling are shown to originate in his faith. Harman, like some of the other slaves who embrace Islam, is inspired by Sangora to discover more about this religion, which has been misunderstood or maligned by his people. Thus, we see that Harman's final acceptance of Islam is motivated both by his love for Somiela, but, more importantly, by his conviction of the higher principles and deep spirituality of the religion. Quite apart from his interest in Somiela, Harman is intrigued by this faith which, on the face of it, seems so different from the one in which he was raised. He first asks his brother Martinus about the "Mohametans", to understand whether Sangora and Somiela are "Mohametans". Martinus's limited knowledge leads him to reveal only that he knows "Mohametans" are allowed more than one wife. When Harman takes Somiela to visit her mother in Cape Town, he takes a pointed interest in the Muslim life of the town and asks Somiela about Islamic ritual and history (1998, 120-121). His interest piqued, Harman later attends a "ratiep" with Sangora, an experience he compares, tellingly, with Sonqua trance dances (1998, 153-155), highlighting the similarity of spiritual experience of the foreign with the wholly indigenous system of belief. Through his contact with Muslims, Harman also meets "Boeta Mai", who, it is

revealed, is related to the Kloot family, making the Kloot family line descended not only from the indigenous Sonqua, but also from slaves, who become Muslim (1998, 162-63). Harman thus emerges as the ideal romantic hero for the slave woman, given his sense of justice and humanity, and the ideal romantic hero for the Muslim woman since his love for the beloved is embodied in a love for her faith. In this respect, the ethos of *The Slave Book* is very much like the ethos of the international bestselling novel, *The Translator* by Sudanese-Scottish writer Leila Aboulela where a transnational romance is dependent on the white, Scottish, atheist hero recognising the truth and value of Islam, apart from the infatuation of his romance with the heroine. Somiela and Harman, in the context of questions of identity and South African nationhood, are the perfect national allegorical romantic couple since they represent the most primal forms of indigenous autochthony and "original" novel national hybridity which, together, implicitly open up the white nation to marginalised others.

The plot of the classic romance also always includes a rival for the affection of the heroine, through the intervention of a secondary hero. In *The Slave Book*, this role is played by Salie, the Indonesian slave at Zoetewater. While Somiela is the object of attention of many men at Zoetewater, it is Salie who is cast as the main rival to Harman. Although Salie, like Harman, is very handsome, and, unlike Harman, is already Muslim, the novel pays tribute to the power of eros, which is totally unpredictable in where it locates affection. When Elspeth, Andries's daughter, cuts off Somiela's silky brown hair in a fit of jealousy, Salie picks up the tresses, which he tries to return to Somiela. Somiela, however, allows him to keep the hair, "acknowledging a connection between them" (1998, 38). But, as soon as Harman appears on the romantic scene, it is clear that Harman holds Somiela's heart. When Salie acknowledges this, Somiela recognises that he changes: "It was a withdrawal she'd sensed. He no longer pursued her. Why could she not feel for him what she felt for Harman? He was handsome and they were bound by the same code. There were no Mohametan slaves [at Zoetewater] and it wasn't every day you had such a chance. With him she need never apologize for her faith" (1998, 243). Despite the "convenience" of this relationship of people with the same background, romance forces the crossing of boundaries, and personal transformations, which present the possibility, projecting historically forward to the contemporary period in which Jacobs writes, of forging an inclusive, united nation.

Salie, as the rival to the openly declared love between Somiela and Harman, is easily removed as an obstacle. The impediments more difficult to remove are the prejudice of society, and the fact that Somiela, quite literally, is possessed by another man, Andries de Villiers. Harman agrees to work for Andries for free for a year in order to buy Somiela's

freedom on the date of the abolition of slavery at the Cape on 1 December 1834, without her having to serve a four-year apprenticeship before actually enjoying freedom like the other slaves.

Although, as discussed, Jacobs follows the contours of the romance plot quite closely, there are also significant ways in which she departs from it. Following the conventional structure of the romance plot, we are presented with the "happy ending" of marriage by Islamic rites of the hero and heroine, and their relocation to the Hantam, where, on the Kloot family farm, Somiela and her daughter are well received, and where she seems to belong. However just two years after their marriage, Harman is murdered in a revenge attack by the boer farmers, whose attempt to kill and enslave a group of Sonqua he had previously scuppered. Without her husband, Somiela is no longer attached to the Hantam and returns to the Cape where she marries Salie, whose future connection with her is foreshadowed throughout the narrative. The happy ending of the putatively white, Christian hero and the Muslim slave woman of colour is very shortlived, and is superseded by the more enduring companionate love of the couple, Somiela and Salie, who do not break any racial, cultural or religious boundaries. Thus, in closure, allegorical romance gives way to realism, perhaps registering ultimate pessimism towards the wish-fulfilment dream of the rainbow nation, the discourse of which was already beginning to fade in the late 1990s when Jacobs wrote *The Slave Book*. Realism is the tone also of the final novel, *Sachs Street*, which closes the "triptych".

The Trauma of National Romantic Betrayal: Emergent Transnational Longings in *Sachs Street*

The family saga, which originates in the late eighteenth century in the love between the Afrikaner coloniser and the indigenous Sonqua woman, continues and achieves fulfilment in the marriage of their son to the Muslim slave woman. Their daughter perpetuates the family line which culminates in the birth of Khadidja Daniels, the protagonist of *Sachs Street*. This novel moves between the childhood of the protagonist in the Bo-Kaap of the 1950s and her adulthood in the late 1980s, at which point, having started her career as a reporter, she now is an editor of a women's magazine. As much as the story is about Khadidja, it is also the story of the Bo-Kaap and its largely Muslim community, a place and collective identity which has acquired historical resonances as prominent as those of District Six. Fathers are treated very differently in this novel compared with *The Slave Book*. In *The Slave Book*, Sangora is a completely reliable, responsible and committed stepfather, putting his own life at risk to

protect Somiela, even though he is not her biological father. *Sachs Street*, by contrast, presents neglectful, absent uncaring fathers, whose philandering habits result in numerous broken, single-parent families like the one in which the protagonist, Khadidja, finds herself. The childhood experience with her father leaves deep scars in Khadidja's psyche for which she later, as an emotionally traumatised adult, seeks psychotherapy. Her emotional crisis is brought on, in particular, by her relationship with a feckless, young, white, born-again-Christian man, through whom Khadidja reenacts the cycle of attachment and loss, love and hate first experienced with her father.

The novel very carefully tracks the family line, which had been unknown to the young Khadidja, through the unexpected arrival of her mother's grandmother, and, with it, the family history the elderly woman reveals. When the great-grandmother arrives in Sachs Street, Khadidja is taken aback that she looks like a white woman: "This was a white person. Anyone could see that. There was no doek on her flaming red hair which had patches of silver at the temples, no tasbieh in her hand on which you recited the name of God thirty-three times, no smell of rose water about her clothes" (2001, 8). Khadidja, apartheid hierarchies having impressed themselves upon her, is disappointed when the old woman, remarking on the charm of the house, speaks an Afrikaans which marks her as coloured: " 'n Pragtage huisie," she said. [Khadidja's] heart sank at the common way she said pretty little house. She didn't say pragtig; she said pragtag. She wasn't a real Afrikaner …" (2001, 8). Khadidja immediately contrasts her own physical appearance with that of the grandmother, sensitised by the more frequent comparison between herself and her sister. While Khadidja is referred to in an offhand way as "[d]ie blas enetjie met die kroes hare – the brown one with the kinky hair" (2001, 9), the sister's fair skin and silky hair are generally more admired. However, Khadidja has inherited, through the great-grandmother, the grey eyes of her forefather Harman, the son of Roeloff, Eyes of the Sky, and Zokho, Smoke in Her Eyes. The family's double heritage, tracked back to their Sonqua mother and Afrikaner father, is repeated in the family history with phenotypically white family members marrying and having children with people of colour. When Khadidja's mother disparagingly refers to her unfaithful ex-husband as the "the son of a slave" (2001, 10), the great-grandmother recounts the history of slavery in their own family: "My grandmother's mother was a slave woman, … the man who raised my grandmother was also a slave. Not the blood father – he was an Afrikaner – but the one who put clothes on her back and shoes on her feet. … So don't say slave as if you have nails in your mouth, … Every Mohammedan born here has a slave in his background" (2001, 10). The sentiment expressed by Khadidja's mother, more often, has

taken the form of total denial of a slave past. Gabeba Baderoon's work on Cape slavery quotes an essay by novelist Zoë Wicomb, where Wicomb suggests that the shame associated, especially with the violation of slave women, has resulted in "the total erasure of slavery from folk memory" (2014, 88). Khadidja's great-grandmother, however, recollects the details of the family tree, which originates in slavery. Her grandmother is "Sihaam" (2001, 86), the daughter of Harman Kloot and Somiela, raised by the Indonesian slave Salie. In a double take of family history, like her mother, Somiela, Sihaam also first has a white husband and then a black husband. We are told in the epilogue of *The Slave Book*, that "Si' am [as the name is spelt in this novel] never fully belonged to her mother" and that "[i]n the end her white blood claimed her and she went off with a German to the new world" (2001, 281). But, in *Sachs Street*, we learn that Sihaam returned to South African and took as husband a person of colour. In yet another iteration of history, Khadidja's great-grandmother also has two husbands, a white husband, who is the father of her son, Solly, and a husband of colour who is the grandfather of Khadidja's mother. The history of the women in the family is continued in the life of Khadidja, who also seems to be torn between white and black in her romantic attachments. Apart from romance bridging a racial divide in the family history, romance also bridges a religious divide, with marriages of culturally Muslim women to Christian men. In addition, because of the double heritage, and their ambiguous looks, there is also a history of playing white, or "playing in the light" as a novel by Zoë Wicomb alludes to it, which is referred to as "passing" in the African-American context. So both Solly, Khadidja's great-grandmother's son by her white husband and his wife Olive, whom the granny refers to as a "baster" (2001, 12), live as white Afrikaners.

Although the three novels present instances of Muslim-Christian marriages among people of colour, not as much is invested in them as in the Muslim-Christian marriages which cross racial lines. In *Sachs Street* Khadidja's best friend, Alison, has a natural desire to be Muslim, which is fully affirmed when she marries her Muslim boyfriend from her school-going years. This marriage, like most of the marriages in *Sachs Street*, terminates in divorce; but Alison continues in her faith and raises her daughter in the faith of Islam (2001, 19-20). Mention is also made of a woman who is derided by the Bo-Kaap community for having married a Christian man, who does not embrace Islam, – "*die jahanaam se blok*" they call her, or "the block on which you would burn in hell for your sins" (2001, 28). We discover towards the end of the novel also that Khadidja has a half-sister, who was raised Christian, from her father's marriage to a Christian woman. These relationships and marriages, which occur in the other novels also, do not, however, form the focus of the narratives. They form

part of subplots, or are incidental references, without the force brought by romantic love to the main plots, which always involve eros across the colour line.

Khadidja's most passionate attachments are to white men. Her first relationship developed when her work as a newspaper reporter brought her in contact with the lawyer, Saville Eisenberg, at the time of the height of the enforcement of the Immorality Act, which proscribed sexual relations across races. Reminiscing about her past, Khadidja describes Saville to Alison as "interesting, sexy, earthy" and that he "totally scrambled [her] brain" (2001, 67). In a later conversation, Khadidja suggests that the relationship could not, however, last since they were "too much the same" because Saville "was Jewish" (2001, 251). The implication of this observation is that a relationship that endures would have to be a relationship that crossed further boundaries. Khadidja then, running completely against her natural proclivities, marries a Muslim man from her community in order to "get over" Saville. As with most of the other marriages in the novel, the marriage to Rudy ends in divorce.

Since eros is a primary driving force in relationships in Jacobs's novels, paradoxically, love and marriage within Islam, with its temperance of mutual human passion through the recognition of the prior higher love of the Divine, cannot constitute the drive within the narrative. After her divorce, Khadidja is the subject of the matchmaking of well-wishers, bringing her into contact with Yusuf, a widower with children. As a father to young children without a mother, Yusuf regards his status as liminal and unsettled, and one which needs to be brought to stability by another marriage as quickly as possible. Marriage here is the somewhat more utilitarian relationship it has cross-culturally and trans-historically been before love became the *sine qua non* of marriage. Love as a necessary prerequisite for marriage is a transformation associated with the cultural developments of European modernity, analysed in the sociological studies of, among others, Lawrence Stone (1977), Niklas Luhmann (1986, 2008), and Anthony Giddens (1992). Through colonisation and globalisation the love-marriage ideology has, furthermore, emerged as universally normative (Wardlow and Hirsch 2006), masking the historical and cultural specificity of its emergence. Yusuf, implicitly reflecting a longer history of the relationship of love with marriage, is upbraided by Khadidja for his pragmatism, where romantic love does not appear to be a necessary rationale for marriage. Yusuf replies to Khadidja's pointed observations by saying, "I'd like to have love. Who wouldn't? But I don't have time to wait for it to roll up to my door. My children are changing right before my eyes" (2001, 70). Yusuf has recourse to religious precept to support his approach: "Falling in love is for sixteen-year-olds. Did the

Prophet fall in love?" (2001, 71). He continues in his explanation of why it is that most people marry:

> For comfort, companionship, to help each other through life. Falling in love was invented by human beings. It wasn't how things happened in the old days. In the old days marriage discussions took place at the well and the boy's father came over and the whole thing was arranged. … Of course I don't want an arranged marriage, and I do want love. But love is one thing. Being in love is another. (2001, 71)

The narrative thus registers a consciousness of the historical relativity of the idea of love and marriage it valorises, but valorises it nonetheless because of the significant nation-building work with which eros is tasked.

The conception of national consolidation underlying Jacobs's romance allegory motivates for the inclusion of people of colour into the colonial, apartheid, and post-1994 South African nation state, which, throughout, largely seems to be defined by whiteness. However, while whiteness enjoys dominance in the previous two novels, in *Sachs Street* South African whiteness loses its authority. The romance hero in *Sachs Street* is decidedly unheroic. The narrator, Sangora, in the prologue to *The Slave Book*, describes Harman as: "A white man with a bigheartedness too dangerous for his own good" (1998, n. pag.). In fact, this observation may be made also of Harman's father, Roeloff, in both of whom benevolence is combined with passion, intelligence and good looks. The love interest in *Sachs Street* is a negation of what Roeloff and Harman represent. Khadidja meets Storm, a fireman whose station is near her new home in Kenilworth, when he returns her dog who had escaped from beneath her fence. Khadidja tells her confidante Alison that the attraction is instant since the "white boy" is a "Mick Jagger with coppery red hair" (2001, 101). He is "[q]uiet, cool, very contained" with "the same bad eyes, the same build, the same sensuality" (2001, 101). Khadidja admits to having had the "incredible urge to bite his lips" (2001, 101). Unlike the romances of the previous novels, where physical attraction was coupled with a sense that the beloved in some way fully actualised the self, the affair in *Sachs Street* is driven purely by sexuality. Storm, in some ways, is figured upon the classic "demon lover", the misogynist whose hold over the female victim results in her psychological or physical destruction" (Reed 2009, vii). The relationship may also be compared with the madness associated with the Layla-Majnun story in Arab culture, or love as addiction in the myth of Tristan and Isolde in European legend. The interpretation of Storm as demon lover with

control over the female partner loses weight when one bears in mind Storm's addiction. In the same way that Khadidja is addicted to Storm, Storm is addicted to alcohol, accounting for his unexpected and destructive behaviour in the course of their relationship

Unlike classic romances which end in harmony and unity, this relationship foreshadows heartache since the lovers do not find consolation in each other. Storm is Khadidja's torment and Khadidja is Storm's torment. The single most significant source of disagreement between the couple is the prior attachment of each to their religion. Although Khadidja does not follow the precepts of Islam strictly, she has a spirituality which Islam fulfils. Following a period of teenage defiance, which saw him thrown out of the parental home, Storm finally finds the Apostolic church, which becomes his new home. Contrasting Apostolic codes with Islamic practices, Khadidja shows up the inconsistencies and contradictions in Apostolic rules, which seem to be geared to brainwashing and pressuring people to convert. A stalemate develops in their tempestuous relationship where Storm desires to marry Khadidja, in part, since he recognises he needs her to take care of him, but is adamant that he could only marry her if she became Apostolic, which for Khadidja is unthinkable. When Khadidja later goes for therapy to deal with the trauma of the relationship and its breakup, her therapist analyses the situation as follows: "He loved you and he still loves you. But he doesn't need you the way he needs the church. There's less pain giving you up" (2001, 274). Khadidja's relationship with Storm plays out in the late 1980s, a period where some of the more sensational injustices of apartheid no longer were enforced. The Immorality and Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Amendment Act of 1985, repealed the prohibition of intimate relationships across the colour line, removing the external obstacle to their relationship. Furthermore, Jacobs writes *Sachs Street* post-1994, at a time where the discourse of the "rainbow nation" was at its peak. However, despite a climate where the external obstacles to the union of black and white might easily be overcome, the impediments to this relationship appear insurmountable. Where race in the past was the biggest barrier, in this relationship, religion, and especially the differences between Christianity and Islam, is the stumbling block to the happy ending. No doubt, Jacobs is responding, in addition, to international political transformations, especially the rise of Islamophobia in North America in the 1990s, which reached fever pitch in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, experienced firsthand by Jacobs's daughter in New York (Jacobs 2008b, 261-62).

The closeness of passion to violence is another ambiguous and volatile dimension of the exploration of romantic love in *Sachs Street*. At the start of their relationship, Khadidja invites Storm to dinner, whereafter their connection shifts abruptly to the physical when

Storm sexually overpowers Khadidja. The scene is tersely and ambivalently written, blurring the line between consensual sex and rape. When Khadidja describes the experience to Alison, Alison's immediate assumption is that the physical intercourse, in fact, was rape. Thus, paradoxically, in the period of the relaxation of apartheid in the years preceding the first democratic election, the narrative summons up again the spectre of concupiscence and shame associated with the slave woman, and in the contemporary period, the female descendant of slaves. The South African white male lover, who symbolises the family trauma of the betraying father-figure, and is the source of the intergenerational trauma tracked back to the routine violation of slave women at the Cape, becomes a source of trauma to the Muslim female slave descendant. The motif of violation and rape is strengthened even further in the novel, since Khadidja later, in the classic response of victims to see themselves as complicit, allows herself to be picked up by a tourist in Greenmarket Square, taken to his hotel room, and accepts payment for her "services". The relationship with Storm in the run-up to a democratic dispensation allegorises a perceived return for the Muslim female slave descendant to the originary historical moment of female violation, to which feminist scholars attribute the shockingly high rates of contemporary prevalence of gender-based violence. Pumla Dineo Gqola expands in *What is Slavery to Me?*, *Rape: A South African Nightmare*, and *Female Fear Factory*, on the insight of Baderoon that "the legacy of slavery affects all South Africans, not only the descendants of enslaved people" (84). Most significantly, however, the tempestuous relationship between Khadidja and Storm reflects the closeness of South African literary representations of love to hatred, violence and, ultimately, tragedy. Jacobs's final novel tracking the genealogy of the female Muslim descendant of slaves seems to revert to the complex origins of cross-racial intimacies in the period of slavery at the Cape. Thus, the national consolidation envisaged through romantic love in the previous two novels is presented as having failed in *Sachs Street*, even though Khadidja carries and gives birth to Storm's child, without his knowledge, after the relationship ends, as a symbol of their passion.

The romantic allegory of the nation pivots, furthermore, at the end of the novel to wider transnational allegorisations. After the breakup, Khadidja goes on a trip to Italy to help her heal. On the trip she meets a Norwegian academic who acts as tour guide. Ulf, clearly attracted by Khadidja, later comes to Cape Town to teach at the University of Cape Town, and buys a house where he and Khadidja live together. Ulf, like Storm, will not convert and become a Muslim for Khadidja. He says he does not "have a feeling for it" (2001, 290), but he affirms that he has a feeling for her and what she believes. It is not clear whether Khadidja

marries Ulf, or simply lives with him, and Ulf also helps raise her son. For Khadidja, even though Ulf proclaims no faith, in Ulf's heart "he is the best of believers" (2001, 299). In the relationship with Ulf, Khadidja does not experience the passion of the relationship with Storm. Ulf openly admits that he has neither youth nor the bad-boy appeal of Storm. Ironically, thus, we see that Khadidja seems to have settled for the companionate marriage the Muslim Yusuf offered, where it was sufficient for there to be love, but the couple did not perpetually have to be in love. In this resolution, the novel abandons romance as national allegory of consolidation in favour of a, possibly emerging, transnational allegory of romance, but nonetheless still located in the Cape in South Africa. Although Ulf is Norwegian, he is settled for the greater part of the year in Cape Town, a location which the protagonist is unable to leave. The ultimate failure of the South African national romance thus seems to open up transnational imaginings through intimate relationships.

Conclusion

The three novels considered implicitly suggest a concern with the belonging and agency of the female Muslim descendant of slaves in the South African nation. Negotiation of the place of this figure is explored through the consolidatory and transformative potential of romantic love, which occurs as an allegory of the potential for unity in the colonial and apartheid state across lines of race, class, and, in the case of Jacobs's novels, in particular, religion. Despite the allegorical possibility presented by eros to effect unity and secure the place of the female Muslim descendant of slaves, Jacobs in each of the novels recognises obstacles and complications in the romance script. It is clear from the attachment of the slave, or her descendant, to white men, that whiteness is the implicitly assumed dominant order of the South African nation about which Jacobs writes. It is only most recently, in *Called to Song* (2018), a novel by Kharnita Mohamed, that the romance of the South African Muslim subject is explored in relation to blackness rather than whiteness. The occlusion of black nationalisms, and more fundamental challenges to the vision of the nation, which is assumed throughout to be a postcolonially derivative Westphalian white-dominated state, represents a failure of imagination in Jacobs's erotic politics. Ultimately in the novels studied the potential of romance in the national imagination gives way to a reconceptualisation of eros as companionate love in a transnational rather than national framework. This may be the outcome in the period in which the final novel was written, which saw increasing international Islamophobia, making the position of the Muslim woman in an international arena more pressing than the national concern. A question may be asked of Jacobs's project.

Why is romance the privileged mode to articulate the (trans)national longing for belonging of the female Muslim descendant of slaves? Is it because of a gendered perception that the domain of love is the sphere of women's power? Is it an acknowledgement of the relative lack of power of the female Muslim descendant of slaves? Or is it a testament to the power of love?

References

Aboulela, Leila. 2001. *The Translator*. Oxford: Heinemann.

Anderson, Benedict. 2016. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso.

Aumeerally, Naseem. 2017. "Reimagining Muslim Women Through the Prism of Minor Diasporic and National Literatures." *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* 19:1: 36-55. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369801X.2016.1142882

Baderoon, Gabeba. 2012. "'The sea inside us': narrating self, gender,place and history in South African memories of the Hajj." *Social Dynamics* 38(2): 237-252. https://doi.org/10.1080/02533952.2012.724249

---. 2014. *Regarding Muslims: From Slavery to Post-Apartheid*. Johannebsurg: Wits UP.

Benadé, Therese. 2004. *Kites of Good Fortune*. Claremont, Cape Town: David Philip.

Brink, André P.1998. *Devil's Valley: A Novel*. London: Secker and Warburg.

---. *Philida*. 2012. London: Secker and Warburg.

Case, Maxine. 2017. *The Softness of the Lime*. Century City, Cape Town: Umuzi.

Christiansë, Yvette. 2007. *Unconfessed*. Cape Town: Kwela.

Farred, Grant. 2000. *Midfielder's Moment: Coloured Literature and Culture in Contemporary South Africa.* Boulder, Colorado: Westview P.

Giddens, Anthony. *The Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love and Eroticism in Modern Societies*. Polity Press, 1992.

Gqola, Pumla Dineo. 2010. *What is Slavery to Me? Postcolonial/Slave Memory in Post-Apartheid South Africa.* Johannesburg: Wits UP.

---. 2015. *Rape: A South African Nightmare*. Auckland Park, Johannesburg: MF Books.

---. 2021. *Female Fear Factory*. Cape Town: Melinda Ferguson Books.

Jacobs, Rayda. 1994. *The Middle Children*. Toronto: Second Story Press.

---. 1996. *Eyes of the Sky*. Oxford: Heinemann.

---. 1998. *The Slave Book*. Cape Town: Kwela.

---. 2001. *Sachs Street*. Cape Town: Kwela.

---. 2003. *Confessions of a Gambler*. Cape Town: Kwela.

---. 2004. *Postcards from South Africa*. Cape Town: Double Storey.

---. 2005a. *Mecca Diaries*. Cape Town: Double Storey.

---. 2005b. Director. *Portrait of Muslim Women*. South Africa: Riempie Productions.

---. 2006. *My Father's Orchid*. 2006. Roggebaai, Cape Town: Umuzi.

---. 2008a. Director. *Confessions of a Gambler*. South Africa: Riempie Productions

---. 2008b. *Masquerade: The Story of My Life.* Roggebaai, Cape Town: Umuzi.

---. 2011. *Joonie*. Auckland Park, Johannesburg: Jacana.

Kasembeli, Serah Namulisa. 2021. "Cape Littoral colonial constructions of barrenness and desire in Therese Benadé's *Kites of Good Fortune* and Rayda Jacobs's *The Slave Book*." *Social Dynamics* 47(2): 297-311. https://doi.org/10.1080/02533952.2021.1963570

Kearney, Jack. 2006. "Representations of Islamic belief and practice in a South African context: Reflections on the fictional work of Ahmed Essop, Aziz Hassim,Achmat Dangor and Rayda Jacobs." *Journal of Literary Studies* 22(1-2): 138-57. https://doi.org10.1080/02564710608530394

Kruger, Loren. 2003. "In a minor key: narrative desire and minority discourses." *Scrutiny 2* 8 (1): 70-74. https://doi.org/10.1080/18125440308565997

Lehman, Daniel W. 2010. "'Born from Restlessness': A Conversation with Rayda Jacobs." *World Literature Today* 84(10): 13-16. https://www.jstor.org/stable/41060428

Luhmann, Niklas. *Love as Passion: The Codification of Intimacy*. Translated by Jeremy Gaines and Doris L. Jones. Polity Press, 1986.

Marais, Barrington and Cheryl Stobie. 2018. "Voices from the margins: Islam, queer identity, and female agency in Rayda Jacobs's *Confessions of a Gambler*." *South African Journal of Philosophy* 37 (4): 515-26. https://doi.org/10.1080/02580136.2018.1537043

Mohamed, Kharnita. 2018. *Called to Song*. Cape Town: Kwela.

Moolla, F. Fiona. 2020. "Becoming-minoritarian: constructions of coloured identities in creative writing projects at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa." In *Routledge Handbook of Minority Discourses in African* Literature, edited by Tanure

Ojaide and Joyce Ashuntantang, 165-81. London: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429354229.

Olaussen, Maria. 2011. “Approaching Asia through the Figure of the Slave in Rayda Jacob's *the Slave Book*.” *Research in African Literatures* 42(3): 31–45. https://doi.org/10.2979/reseafrilite.42.3.31

Regis, Pamela. 2007. *A Natural History of the Romance Novel*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: U of Pennsylvania Press.

Reed, Toni. 2009. *Demon Lovers and Their Victims in British Fiction*. Lexington, Kentucky: U of Kentucky P.

Roos, Henriette. 2005. “Torn between Islam and the other: South African novelists on cross-cultural relationships.” *Journal of Literary Studies* 21(1-2): 48-67. https://doi.org/10.1080/02564710508530365

Smith, Neville. 2016. “Emancipation and ‘The Great Wheel of Labour’: Enduring Liminality in Rayda Jacobs’s *the Slave Book* (1988) and a Painting of Two Slave Women (1859) by Thomas Baines.” *English in Africa* 42(3): 71., https://doi.org/10.4314/eia.v42i3.4.

Sommer, Doris. *Foundational Fictions: The National Romances of Latin America*. U of California P, 1993.

Stone, Lawrence. *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500–1800*. Harper and Row, 1977.

Wardlow, Holly and Jennifer S. Hirsch.. *Modern Loves: The Anthropology of Romantic Courtship and Companionate Marriage*. Ann Arbor, 2006.

Wenzel, Marita. 2004. “Re-Writing the 'Slave Narrative' : Rayda Jacobs's *The Slave Book* and André Brink's *The Rights of Desire*.” *English in Africa* 31(1): 91–103. https://www.jstor.org/stable/40239001 .