

THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF  
BLACK AND ASIAN BRITISH WRITING

*The Cambridge History of Black and Asian British Writing* provides a comprehensive historical overview of the diverse literary traditions impacting on this field's evolution, from the eighteenth century to the present. Drawing on the expertise of over forty international experts, this book gathers innovative scholarship to look forward to new readings and perspectives, while also focusing on undervalued writers, texts, and research areas. Creating new pathways to engage with the naming of a field that has often been contested, readings of literary texts are interwoven throughout with key political, social, and material contexts. In making visible the diverse influences constituting past and contemporary British literary culture, this *Cambridge History* makes a unique contribution to British, Commonwealth, postcolonial, transnational, diasporic, and global literary studies, serving both as one of the first major reference works to cover four centuries of black and Asian British literary history as well as a compass for future scholarship.

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THE CAMBRIDGE  
HISTORY OF  
BLACK AND ASIAN BRITISH  
WRITING

\*

*Edited by*

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*To Maya, Alexander, and Lara  
and the future mixings of cultural streams*

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## *Preface and Acknowledgements*

We began work on this book in 2015 to consolidate the now significant body of academic scholarship which has sought for several decades to provide a wide-angled vision of Britain's mixed cultural heritage and to locate the history of black and Asian literary culture as a formative and integral element within it. As the development of the project coincided with a referendum called by the UK government in June 2016 for Britain to 'exit' the European Union (Brexit) and once more close its borders, the broader aims have become even more urgent. Ironically perhaps, given this context, this project has been built on the fruits of much cross-cultural exchange and communication: not only are the editors situated in different locations – one in Britain at Queen Mary University, London and the other in Germany at the University of Münster – but black and Asian British writing is featured prominently on the literature curriculum in both institutions.

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