

American Anthropologist Ruth Landes and Race Relations Research in Postwar Britain:

A Research File

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In 2010 Mica Nava was awarded funding by the Ruth Landes Memorial Research Fund, a programme of the Reed Foundation in the US, to examine the published and unpublished work American anthropologist Ruth Landes about 'color' and 'biracialism' in Britain in the 1950s and to situate it in the broader field of postwar UK race relations research. This 'research file' includes the grant application to the Reed Foundation made in 2010, an edited version of the report originally submitted to the Reed Foundation in 2011, an introduction written in 2013, and a selection of related images. The file has been published by the University of East London's research open access repository (ROAR) because it is not the practice of the Reed Foundation to make its funded research reports available to the public.

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1.

INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH FILE

October 2013

I first came across the American anthropologist Ruth Landes, was awarded a Fulbright fellowship to study the distinctive social profile of people of colour in Britain in 1951, when I was researching the work of 1950s and 1960s race relations social investigators in the UK for *Visceral Cosmopolitanism: Gender, Culture and the Normalisation of Difference* (Nava 2007). An article by Landes entitled 'A Preliminary Survey of Negro-White Relationships in Britain' (1952a; Fig 1) was widely referred to in the contemporary literature on the subject (in Richmond 1954, Banton 1955 and 1959, Collins 1957, Henderson 1960 and Patterson 1963). Sociologist Michael Banton also refers to personal exchanges with Landes and a full-length manuscript by her entitled 'Color in Britain' (Landes 1954) which he lists among other unpublished works on race relations by researchers associated, as was he, with the pioneering department of social anthropology and directed by Kenneth Little at the University of Edinburgh (Banton 1959).¹ I was particularly intrigued because one of my concerns at the time was to examine the work done by women on questions of migration and race in the 1950s (Nava 2007 and 2013). Women were over-represented in the field – constituting about two thirds of published and unpublished but cited authors – in a decade when more than 80% of students studying sociology and anthropology at LSE were men. Given this interest, Ruth Landes was definitely worth following up.

I found that her papers, among them the 'Color in Britain' manuscript, were housed in the National Anthropological Archives at the Smithsonian Institution (NAASI) in Washington, DC, and that there was a memorial research fund in her name. I also found Sally Cole's intellectual biography *Ruth Landes: A Life in Anthropology* (2003) which, although a valuable resource, focuses on Landes' anthropological research with indigenous peoples in the Americas, bypassing entirely her work on race in urban Britain. So the research possibilities were exciting. I speculated that the manuscript might even be worth publishing now, sixty years later, because of what it might add to our knowledge of race and migration in the early 1950s as well as to what is known about the personal histories of the sociologists and anthropologists contributing to the field. I anticipated that it would probably lead to the development of further publications. At the very least, it would expand our knowledge of Landes' scholarship. I applied for a grant to the Ruth Landes Memorial Research Fund, a subsidiary programme of the Reed Foundation, Inc. to do research on Landes' UK work, and was successful.² The financial assistance enabled me to

¹ For more on Kenneth Little and the Edinburgh department, see below in 3.1. The other unpublished manuscripts cited in Banton are by Violaine Junod (1952), Joan Maizels (1959), Eyo Bassey N'dem (1953) and Sheila Webster (1956).

² Applications to the Fund are evaluated according to the following criteria: 'The merit and significance of the applicant's proposal; the applicant's qualifications; the relevance of the project to subjects that were of interest to Dr. Landes during her career; and the degree to which grant funds are likely to contribute to the success of the proposed project. Special consideration are given to applications for work with the papers and unpublished manuscripts of Ruth Schlossberg Landes at the National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, or among related materials in other public and private collections; and for projects in and among the geographical and cultural communities studied by Dr. Landes.' <http://www.thereedfoundation.org/landes/grants.html>

spend time at the Reed Foundation in New York and the Smithsonian Anthropological Archives in Washington DC in the Spring of 2011 and to work on the project on my return to the UK.

This ‘research file’ includes my original grant application (2010), an edited version of the report (written in 2011 and revised in 2013), some relevant images, and this introduction written specifically for the publication of the file in the University of East London’s research open access repository (ROAR) in 2013. As it not the practice of the Reed Foundation to make its funded research findings available to the public, ROAR seemed an appropriate publication site. The original report has been revised to provide a more succinct analysis of the texts and a more intelligible and relevant account for a readership interested not only in Ruth Landes’ unpublished manuscripts but also in the broader context of race thinking and the geopolitical specificity of Britain in the 1950s.

Ruth Landes has turned out to be a far more complex figure with far more contentious views and style of scholarship than I anticipated. The initial expectation – the hope – based largely on Cole’s biography (2003) that she would emerge as an innovative thinker ahead of her time in relation to questions of race and gender, a ‘moderniser and a cosmopolitan’ (as I suggested in my grant application) has been only partially borne out. Disappointingly much of her work, and particularly her writing on race relations in Britain, has turned out to be unconvincing, rambling and often based on minimal and unreliable research. Although also at times astute and bold in terms of the questions she poses, the oddity of some of her views can be exemplified by her conviction that, if slavery had been institutionalised in Britain, ‘coloured’ migrants would be better off because they would ‘belong’, as African Americans did in the Jim Crow segregationist regimes of the USA. This is in contrast to most of her British contemporaries, as the report will show. So what readers will note over the pages that follow is my growing frustration at her contrary conclusions and poor scholarship. Yet despite my disenchantment, the process of analysing her papers has nonetheless been significant, as an instance not only of vicissitudes of the research process but also of the complex intellectual and affective relationship that develops between researcher and researched person, in this case between Ruth Landes and me.

The controversial nature of Landes’ views on British race relations cannot be properly appreciated without some understanding of her professional and personal life. This is of course always the case with academic and fictional writing, even if not usually acknowledged. In Landes’ case the connections are more pressing than usual because the contradictory nature of her argument in the 1950s manuscripts seems to go against the grain of her experience and emotions, and thus are harder to decode. The following brief account of key features of her life, most of which seem relevant to her thinking about race, is based largely on Cole (2002 and 2003). Additional information was drawn from the Landes’ archives in New York and Washington, (Glenn and Wang 2010) and David Price’s book on McCarthyism and activist anthropologists (Price 2004).³

³Many of these biographical details were omitted from the submitted report because it was assumed the Reed Foundation was already familiar with them, having also contributed funding towards Cole’s research.

Landes' academic career started promisingly at Columbia University with a BA in Sociology (1928) and an unusual MA thesis in Social Work on black converts to Judaism in Harlem. The interface between religion, race and marginalisation was to be a central feature of her research for many years. She went on to enrol on the doctoral programme in anthropology and studied under Franz Boas, one of the most illustrious and radical anthropologists of the 20th century, the founder of the celebrated Columbia department and an influential critic of, among other things, racist science and racism, and Ruth Benedict, also a 'cultural determinist' and politically progressive (Mandler 2009), who was to be Landes' academic and personal mentor. Margaret Mead was also a member of the faculty. With the encouragement of Benedict, Landes embarked on what became a series of innovative ethnographic fieldwork projects, first with Native American Ojibwa on the US-Canadian border and later with African Brazilian communities in Bahia, in which her focus was on matriarchy and male homosexuality (Landes 1938 and 1947). The research for these two projects was unorthodox in terms of its methods and challenged existing anthropological perspectives so led to a significant dispute with colleagues in the field. Professional rivalries seem to have resulted in the work being neglected at the time, though it is now the best known of Landes' writing, largely due to Sally Cole's efforts.⁴ In Cole's view, Landes contributed significantly to the discipline by developing a more nuanced understanding of different cultural contexts and the interaction between anthropologists and their informants. She argues that Landes was ahead of her time in her engagement with gender difference and the mutability of sexuality as well as in her methodology:

The Ojibwa Woman (1938) and *The City of Women* (1947) ... not only profiled women's lives but also experimented with textual strategies that anticipated late-20th-century postmodernist and feminist ethnography. Her writing was reflexive, and she used dialogue, life histories and personal narrative in multivocal texts that create a sense of the dynamic complexity, contradictions and constraints that compose the experience of living in culture (Cole 2003: 5).

Yet Landes' contribution to the discipline was rarely appreciated by her contemporaries. During the war she worked briefly for Gunnar Myrdal on his magisterial study *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy*, but, although acknowledged in a long list of people who had 'undertaken a research task', her draft chapter on 'The Ethos of the Negro in the New World' was not included, in part because of a critical response from reviewers (Cole 2003). Over the following years Landes had a number of different jobs, among them, in 1944, interim director of the Committee Against Racial Discrimination in New York. It was during this period, according to Price (2004), that she was investigated by the FBI, who interviewed her supervisors on the Myrdal project on the grounds of her suspected communist sympathies. This may well have contributed to the stalling of her career but is not a theme addressed by Cole. In the late 1940s, she received a letter from British anthropologist Kenneth Little inviting her to join his team in Edinburgh on a study of 'colonial assimilation' in the UK (NAASI Box 4). In 1951 she successfully applied for a Fulbright fellowship to work on race relations. On her return to the US she wrote up her 'Color in Britain' manuscript (1954), which seems to have remained largely

⁴ Both books were republished with a new introduction by Cole in the 1990s. *The City of Women* was published again, in a second edition, in 2006.

unread until I acquired it on an inter-library loan in 2009. Cole, although not interested in it for her own intellectual biography, nevertheless discovered that it had been rejected by Oxford University Press.

During the ensuing years Landes was employed on a number of short-term teaching and research contracts in New York and California. Without fixed employment she seemed unable to settle either in terms of residence or intellectual focus and her research over the next decade covered a wide spectrum of topics, including child welfare, youth street gangs, the Mexican population of the South-West, the eastern European Jewish family, racial stratification in the deep South and bilingualism in South Africa and the Basque country. Towards the end of the 1950s she wrote a second shorter version of the UK material, this time called 'British Color in Perspective' (1959) but again failed to find a publisher. Details of the British research and my reading of it are developed in the main part of the report below.

On the whole Landes' work remained unrecognised during her lifetime. She acquired her first permanent academic post in 1965 when in her late fifties, and that was at McMaster University in Canada, which she considered provincial. Over the following years she tried for positions in the US but despite her publication profile on the Americas and considerable teaching experience, she was not successful. While in Canada she applied for, but failed to get, funding from the Canada Council to conduct research in Kenya and South Africa. Obligated under Canadian law to retire at 67, she continued to work on various drafts of a semi-fictionalised memoir about a year spent at Fisk University in the late 1930s and her affair with Elmer Imes, a black professor, but no publisher accepted it.⁵ She also spent the years of retirement assembling and annotating her papers, consisting of personal notebooks, letters, field notes and manuscripts, arranging for their eventual deposition in the National Anthropological Archives at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC and which now fill 63 boxes – thus attempting to shape her legacy and win some posthumous recognition after a relatively lacklustre academic career.

Cole also provides us with the details of Landes' unconventional, sometimes-transgressive and conflicted personal life which, she suggests, also contributed to her professional marginalisation. The notebooks and correspondence that I read support this view. From the vantage point of the early 21st century in which the intertwining of identity and scholarship are accepted as significant, Landes' personal history and lifestyle make her an even more intriguing academic.⁶ In fact, Landes herself recognised that and in her notebooks reflects often on her own psychic history and its professional ramifications. She was born in New York in 1908 to left-wing secular Jewish immigrants. Her father, Joseph Schlossberg, was founder and general secretary of the Garment Workers Union and had a wide network of contacts among white and black political activists. Landes grew up in a culture that was radical in relation to the labour market and the political sphere but conventional about the role of women. Nevertheless, she divorced her first husband (from whom she had acquired the name Landes) when he objected to her enrolling as a doctoral candidate. But although she appreciated being at Columbia, the elite climate of the

⁵ Imes was twenty years older than she and part of the Harlem Renaissance movement. There are four incomplete drafts of the 'fictionalised memoir' among Landes' papers. Fisk was founded in the 19th century for freed slaves and remains today a preeminent university for African Americans.

⁶ These issues and the debates are discussed in Nava 1992; 2007 and 2013.

department often made her feel she didn't belong. Her sense of marginalisation and her identification with other marginals persisted throughout her life and the issue of belonging is an enduring – even obsessive – theme in her work. Yet it was commonly agreed that she was extremely beautiful, articulate and dynamic right into her old age. But this was not always an advantage in professional terms and her sense of not-belonging was both acted out and compounded – and her 'reputation' damaged – by her unorthodox choice of partners. Imes, the black professor at Fisk, was not her only non-white lover. She also had a close relationship with Edison Carneiro, a black Brazilian anthropologist, whom she met while doing fieldwork in the early 1940s; she was engaged to marry one Mexican American and later was briefly married to another, Ignacio Lutero Lopez, in California in the 1950s. She may also have had relationships with women. But she seems to have been ambivalent about them all and in the end she died alone and without children. Even her social relations with her brother and his family had unravelled, though it is not clear why. Some of the complex ramifications of this bold, complex and unconventional life are addressed below.

What is notable is that, in Cole's view, Ruth Landes was maligned and underestimated as a person and an intellectual because of the closed, conservative and sexist world of academic anthropology in the United States. Cole is both admirer and defender of Landes and her work on the Americas. As the report below will show, I have not been able to be as enthusiastic about her work on Britain, although at the beginning of my project I had hoped, and indeed expected, to be.

This loss of respect for Landes as a person and writer itself requires some analysis. It is as important to be reflexive about the semiconscious motivation underpinning my research, as it is to be alert to the contradictions in hers. Perhaps the force of my initial excitement and anticipation was transmuted into the toughness of my critique. Disappointment usually has its roots in expectation. So, if readers think, when they get to the end of the report, that I have been excessively hard, this confirms the point I make about Ruth Landes' work. In all cases, our standpoints, our personal biographies and politics, inform what and whom we choose to research and how we interpret our findings. This inevitably makes for complex relationships with the people we engage with in the archives. Sometime we grow to admire them⁷ and sometimes the obverse happens, as it did, regrettably, for me, with Ruth Landes. I had hoped for more from her so I felt let down. But this does not mean there is nothing of value here. On the contrary, Ruth Landes' work and my reading of it articulate a good deal about transformations in race relations and the position of women in social science over the last half century as well as about the contradictory and unpredictable nature of research.

⁷ This happened to me with Gordon Selfridge, whose support for cosmopolitanism, the artistic potential of commerce, and good working conditions for his women employees ended up endearing him to me (Nava 1996 and 2007).

2.

GRANT APPLICATION TO RUTH LANDES MEMORIAL RESEARCH FUND, A PROGRAMME OF THE REED FOUNDATION

Submitted November 2010

Ruth Landes and Race Relations Research in Postwar Britain

2.1. *Abstract*

In 1951 Ruth Landes was awarded a Fulbright fellowship to study ‘race relations’ in Britain.⁸ The outcome, written on her return to New York, was a 350-page manuscript ‘Color in Britain: a Study of Emerging Biracialism’ comparing the meanings and practices of ‘race’ and racial discrimination in Britain and US. Landes was among the first to focus on the national and historical specificity of people of African origin and to point to differences in class, status and attitudes in different geopolitical contexts. Although cited in the British race relations literature of the 1950s and early 1960s, Landes’ manuscript was never published. I hope to uncover some of the reasons why by examining her personal and professional papers.

Landes’ anthropological research on populations in the Americas has received increasing scholarly attention in recent years yet her work on the UK and Europe remains neglected. My research into this aspect will form part of a larger examination of the writing and social context of (mainly women) anthropologists and sociologists of race in Britain during the 1950s and 1960s, initiated for my book *Visceral Cosmopolitanism: Gender, Culture and the Normalisation of Difference* (2007). An examination of her background research should both enhance understanding of Landes’ scholarship and contribute to my analysis of the development of British race relations thinking and policy in the postwar period. The research will consist of textual analysis, archival research into professional and personal papers, interviews and a study of the historical context.

2.2. *Project Narrative*

The context and conceptual concern out of which the current research proposal has emerged are set out in the chapter entitled ‘Thinking Internationally, Thinking Sexually: Race in Postwar Fiction, Film and Social Science’ in Nava 2007. The initial purpose was to explore the literary and cinematic representations of migrants from the colonies to the UK produced in 1950s and early 1960s. This was in part a dialogue with British Caribbean novelist and political essayist, Caryl

⁸ The abstract and project narrative have been minimally changed for this publication. Additional documents including a writing sample, costings and referee details are omitted.

Phillips, who maintained that most British writers of that moment ignored questions of race and migration. The ‘myopia’ was ‘shocking’ he wrote (Phillips 2004: 6). In response I argued that black people were not as absent from the literary landscape as he presumed and pointed to the work of a number of women writers and filmmakers who had indeed engaged sympathetically with the issues. The background research for the chapter involved reading contemporary sociological and anthropological accounts of race relations in urban Britain. What is relevant for this project is that these turned out to be as rich a resource in terms of both content and provenance as the fiction and film of the period and, as I describe in the chapter, were also often produced by women. There was not the space then, while I was completing my book, to carry out the in-depth investigations and historical analysis that this finding merited. Nevertheless, as the writing sample indicates, the groundwork for the current proposal to the Ruth Landes Memorial Research Fund was already in place. The critical questions had been asked.

A year ago I returned to this material and have since tracked down new information about these scholars and their work. In some cases I have been able to access previously unpublished and/or lost manuscripts. Thus, in addition to the Landes’ 1953 book-length manuscript (a copy of which was obtained from the Smithsonian by my university), I have now read the unpublished work of Joan Maizels (1960) (whose personal papers were loaned to me following a chance meeting with her daughter) and have had access to Sheila Webster Kitzinger’s unpublished thesis (1955) (which is housed in the Bodleian Library). I have tracked down South African anthropologist Violaine Junod through the daughter of anthropologists Leo and Hilda Kuper, who were Junod’s friends, though I have not yet had access to her unpublished manuscript (1952). I have learned more about anthropologist Judith Henderson, whose published work I had read but about whom I knew nothing in personal terms at the time my book went to press. I now know she was the daughter of psychoanalysts Adrian and Karin Stephen, (Virginia Woolf’s brother and sister-in-law), a student of Bertrand Russell’s in UK and Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead’s in US, and that, with her husband photographer Nigel Henderson, worked as a ‘diarist’ for Mass Observation in East London during the war (Walsh 2001). Ruth Landes was one of the most established of the cluster of women anthropologists whose work on ‘race’ in Britain was cited (see Richmond 1955; Banton 1959; Henderson 1960; Patterson 1963) but not published during this decade.

My proposed research will both analyse and contextualise the published and unpublished writing. This will involve examining specific texts and their relation to contemporary and more recent anthropological and sociological debates on race, class, gender and language. It will also include looking at the editorial practices of publishers, the funding of anthropological research in universities, and the employment and specialisms of women in the field. Sally Cole, Landes’ biographer, suggests that the manuscript based on Landes’ UK research was submitted to Oxford University Press (Cole 2003: 273) but despite Landes’ Fulbright fellowship and her research track record it was not published. I hope to find at least a partial explanation for this failure among her papers. I will also look at the Institute for Race Relations Archive at Warwick University and the Kenneth Little Social Anthropology Archive at Edinburgh (Little 1973 [1948]; Rich 1990; Mills 2008). Little, whom Landes had met at Fisk, was a referee for her Fulbright

application and a source of personal support when she arrived in the UK in 1952.⁹ A correspondence between them is in the Landes archive and will be looked at.

The influence of professional trajectory, political alignment and individual history on scholarship is clearly evident in this instance; it has been stressed by Cole in her intellectual biography of Landes (Cole 2003) and has been a longstanding academic concern of mine (Nava 1992 and 2007). Thus the proposed project will also investigate relevant aspects of the personal narratives of the women whose research I will examine.

I signalled in my book, though did not develop, that most of these women anthropologists and sociologists were either Jewish or married to a Jew and/or a refugee from Europe. Several were also antiracist political activists of one kind or another. Egginton falls into this category: her story, based on an interview I did with her, is spelled out in chapter 6 of Nava 2007. Henderson's detailed life history has yet to be followed up, but her father was a close friend as well as the brother-in-law of Leonard Woolf and a colleague of many of the Jewish émigré founders of British psychoanalysis, including Freud. Landes, as Cole has told us (2003) was Jewish from New York, had grown up with left-wing politics and had been involved intellectually and personally with black American and Brazilian colleagues. Junod was from South Africa, a leader of the anti-apartheid Liberal Party and arrested in 1956 for helping to organize protests against pass laws for Africans. Ruth Glass was a Jewish refugee from Berlin and, as she stated categorically in the introduction to her book on Caribbean migrants: '[was] not dispassionate on this subject'. 'I share the very definite opinion ... [that] discrimination because of race, colour or religion is an intolerable insult to the dignity of an individual' ... (1960: xi). Marie Jahoda, another contributor to the literature, was Jewish from Vienna and imprisoned for her anti-fascist activism in 1936 (Jahoda 2002). Maizels was also a declared left-wing supporter and, with Nan Berger, wrote a path-breaking feminist text (1962). Both Maizels and Webster (later Kitzinger) were married to Jews (Uwe Kitzinger, the eminent political theorist, was also a refugee from Berlin). Sheila Patterson was married to a Polish refugee and had been involved in South African radical politics. She identified her research as 'somewhat negrophile', along with 'most of the ... sociological literature on the subject' (Patterson 1963: 41).

The social science contributors to the formation of race relations thinking and policy in Britain in the postwar period were not the only ones associated with 'non-Jewish Jewishness' (as Isaac Deutscher described radical secular Jews of the mid century, 1968). Among the other public opinion formers was Stefan Lorant (a refugee from Hungary), founder and editor of the mass-circulation illustrated magazine *Picture Post* who, with other émigré photographers and journalists, promoted 'unprejudiced' attitudes to migrants from the colonies in the postwar period, as the concluding sentences to the 1949 article 'Is there a British Colour Bar?' indicate:

[The matter] can only be solved by a true integration of white and coloured people in one society. And for that to take place there must be some sort of revolution inside every individual mind – coloured and white – where prejudices based on bitterness, ignorance and patronage have been established (Kee 1984: 260).

⁹ In fact it was 1951.

The picture I present here, in which some of the main academic and media commentators on questions of race were politically antiracist and influenced by personal histories rooted outside Britain, goes against the representation of the literature and the moment advanced by historians such as Bill Schwarz (1996), Chris Waters (1997), Frank Mort *et al* (1999) and Wendy Webster (2005) who stress the legacy of Empire, a general xenophobia towards migrants from the colonies and a general consolidation of ‘Englishness’ in the postwar years. Although nostalgia for British imperial tradition was undoubtedly present in policy and everyday culture at the time, the views of British academics, journalists, novelists, filmmakers and the general public were a good deal more heterogeneous, fissured and more critical of British insularity than the accounts of these historians allow. As Landes pointed out, the race situation in Britain was much more open and attitudes more varied and unpredictable than in US, sometimes disconcertingly so (1952). Glass makes a similar point: the ‘distinctiveness’ of dark skinned newcomers ‘often causes antagonism; but it also frequently evokes ardent sympathy... the colour question produces vehement reactions, negative and positive’ (1960: 3). Tony Kushner in his study of ‘race’ in the Mass Observation archives (2004) also points to the wide range of attitudes across the class spectrum and the paucity of research on antiracism:

Where public opinion is cited... it has tended to ... focus ... on the minority of the population that is violently opposed to newcomers and ethnic pluralism... There is an absolute failure to engage with those who are positively inclined. The media, academics, and research and policy institutes alike have reinforced such approaches. There is ... an extensive literature on racism and discrimination in Britain but a dearth of material on those who have fought prejudice or worked systematically with immigrant and minority groups (Kushner 2004: 5).

Of course not all who fought prejudice were themselves ‘foreigners’. Nevertheless, it does seem that a non-British provenance in those years lent itself to a greater empathy with the new wave of outsiders. What this suggests is an increasing rift between traditionalists, embedded in a history of empire and commonwealth, and modernisers and cosmopolitans, those dislocated and radicalised by fascism, anti-semitism, the war and decolonisation, who were committed to a more democratic and inclusive future. It also seems that women, who constituted a very small proportion of anthropologists and sociologists at the time, were disproportionately inclined to identify with difference and marginality and to engage in their intellectual work with people from ‘abroad’.

These are broadly the issues that will be followed up in the proposed study. Some have already been superficially addressed in Nava (2007). Funding from the Ruth Landes Foundation will permit me to explore them in more depth. It will enable me to look in detail at the British research of Ruth Landes and also to follow up the community of scholars working with similar concerns during the same period. So far no one has attempted this.

3.

REPORT TO RUTH LANDES MEMORIAL RESEARCH FUND, A PROGRAMME OF THE REED FOUNDATION

Submitted September 2011, revised October 2013

Ruth Landes and Race Relations Research in Postwar Britain

3.1. Overview of Findings

The Reed Foundation awarded me a grant for my project 'Ruth Landes and Race Relations Research in Postwar Britain' in February 2011. In March I spent several weeks in the Reed Foundation New York office and the National Anthropological Archives Smithsonian Institution (NAASI) in Washington DC, examining files relating to Ruth Landes' published and unpublished research, particularly in the field of British race relations, her fiction, her personal life and the establishment of the memorial research fund in her name. All relevant materials in the archives were copied or photographed so I have a considerable collection of evidence that I have since been able to study in greater depth in London.

As was made clear in my application for funding from the Landes Research Fund, my main initial interest was in the unpublished work produced by Landes about the 'coloured' population in UK, based on data collected in the early 1950s while she was on a Fulbright Fellowship at Edinburgh University at the invitation of anthropologist Kenneth Little. This report focuses mainly on that research and the British context. It is part of my larger concern with the contribution of sociologists and anthropologists to British thinking about questions of immigration, settlement and inter-racial relations in urban areas in the postwar period. The focus on the 1950s, the decade Landes spent working on the situation in Britain, complements my existing writing on race relations in UK during the war and from the 1960s onwards (Nava 2007 and 2013).

The significance of Landes' anthropological work about the Americas has been fairly widely acknowledged (Cole 2003), in part because of her proximity to some of the key figures in the discipline during the 1930s and 1940s (particularly Franz Boas, Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead) and in part because of Cole's own promotion. But no one, as far as I am aware, has studied or assessed her largely unpublished UK research. I was alerted to a book length manuscript by a reference in Banton (1959) who also cites his personal communications with her. But only two very brief publications based on Landes UK research exist (three pages in all); both are accounts of her initial impressions and were published during or shortly after her visit to the UK (1952a, 1952b). The one-page article in *Man* (1952a) appears to be a summary of 'a communication' to the Royal Anthropological Institute (probably 1952c). Described as

Nos. 184, 185

A Preliminary Statement of a Survey of Negro-White Relationships in Britain. By Ruth Landes, Ph.D. Summary of a communication to the Institute, 6 May, 1952

Everywhere the British, especially the English, resented the

From recent conversations with Negroes in London, Dr. Landes had become conscious of a newly aroused bitter awareness over 'what they regarded as the naked exposure of their second-class status.' This was growing with the strained South African situation, the negotiations over the Bamangwato succession, and the 'painful conduct of discussions over proposed Central African federation.' The question arose, she said, of what this connoted for future relationships within the Commonwealth. Besides, 'The Negro élite studying in Britain, who might have mediated in some fashion, are actually trained for leadership outside, in the colony of origin where they are thought to belong. The Negro thousands in the United Kingdom, whatever the land of their birth, are not assisted into established relationships within British home society. They belong vaguely, if beautifully, to the Crown: never, unhappily, to the country.'

GENERAL

Since our present knowledge of human genetics is very largely limited to such simple segregating systems as certain pathological

The study of adaptation presents subtler problems of experiment and interpretation: the unit of selection is the whole genotype, and the unit of adaptive response is the entire functioning organism. Moreover, the effects of selection may be very slow in manifesting themselves, particularly in man. An example of the use of fossil material, comparative anatomy, and experimental anatomical

There is one further article published in the US, which, although entitled 'Biracialism in American Society', largely rehearses the arguments in her manuscripts about the UK (Landes 1955). The Ruth Landes archives at the Reed Foundation offices in New York and the archive entitled Papers of Ruth Schlossberg Landes (PRSL) at the National Anthropological Archives at the Smithsonian Institution (NAASI) in Washington turn out to include *two* unpublished and undated full-length manuscripts based on the British research. The first is 'Color in Britain: A Study in Emerging Biracialism' (350 pages) which was completed on Landes' return to the US in about 1954 (PRSL Box 48) (Landes 1954). This file also includes a 'Summary' of 20 pages, perhaps the basis for the *Man* publication (1952a). The second manuscript, 'British Color in Perspective' (136 pages), is a revised and shorter version of the earlier one, though also includes some new material, and was probably written towards the end of the decade when Landes was living in California, in about 1959 (PRSL Box 47) (Landes 1959). The Landes archive at the Smithsonian archives also contains a file entitled 'British Race Relations' (PRSL Box 20) which includes limited notes on her fieldwork, some press cuttings, a conference paper (Landes 1952c) and some correspondence with British colleagues. All are discussed below in the detailed analysis of the manuscripts.

My intention was to focus on these sources and on other contextual and biographical elements in order to expand my understanding of the situation in the UK. I also hoped to discover more about Landes' interest in Britain and her decision to apply for the Fulbright Fellowship as well as why the manuscripts had remained unpublished. I expected her to fit broadly into the category of radical women social investigators as described in my 2010 grant application to the Reed Foundation (above). While looking through the archive I came across other material of interest including further unpublished manuscripts, research funding proposals, autobiographical writing, personal and professional correspondence, personal diaries and notebooks. All of these have contributed to an expanded and often contradictory picture of Landes as an anthropologist and human being.

Most significantly I have found her scholarship disappointing. It is sometimes based on surprisingly little evidence and big claims are poorly argued. Her anthropological field training and her experience with indigenous communities in North and South America prepared her to deploy an ethnographic method which relied on interaction with a small number of informants from a relatively undocumented environment. This mode however is not appropriate for studies of urban populations from diverse social and ethnic backgrounds in complex modern post-Imperial societies such as Britain in the mid-twentieth century, unless based on an informed and nuanced understanding of the relevant historical, social and geopolitical context. This is often lamentably absent in Landes' writing and is perhaps the greatest flaw in her research. She is frequently ignorant about key features of British colonial and immigrant history and the specificities of English language use. Some of the work makes general claims that expose a superficial grasp of the existing literature on the topic and there is little evidence of her own original research. The number of informants from whom Landes derives the data on which her argument is founded seems to be shockingly small. This in itself need not be a methodological problem if properly handled and defended. But this is not the case here. Judging from the British Race Relations file (PRSL Box 20), her conclusions about 'colour' and 'biracialism' in Britain

seem to have been based on her observations of just two families in Edinburgh. The first of these consisted of her host, Kenneth Little, and his Jamaican wife, Iris. Whether Little was aware that he was one of Landes' sample families is not clear. As a research strategy it was audacious of Landes to select her academic host, referee and colleague for this purpose. Some of the comments about the Littles' personal relationship in Landes field notes are astonishingly presumptuous. She refers to his 'neurosis' and 'compulsive symbolic acting out' and to his wife Iris's 'punitiveness' and 'marriage without love'. The second family, consisted of Arthur Motley, a black American from the South who had studied medicine in Scotland and lived there for 20 years, his white Scottish wife Annette and their teenage daughter, about whom more below. This family is referred to frequently in the manuscripts. Notes on the Littles and the Motleys amount to just four sides of paper in the British Race Relations file (Figs 2, 3, 4 and 5 at the end of this document). Overall the quality of Landes' research, argument and writing is extremely uneven. Her texts include lengthy passages where she quotes from or summarises the work of her colleagues in Edinburgh (Michael Banton, Eyo Bassey N'dem, Alex Carey, Sydney Collins, Kenneth Little, Anthony Richmond and Sheila Webster) but she then goes on to ignore or contradict their conclusions and reverts to her original firmly-held assumptions without appearing to be aware that she is doing so.

Nevertheless, despite these caveats, there are also some strengths. One of the most commendable aspects of her research into race relations in Britain is her determination to explore and compare the specificity of UK practices and meanings not only with the US but also (to a lesser extent) with South Africa and Brazil. As far as I am aware no one else attempted such comparative research at the time. Notwithstanding, she principally addresses herself to an American readership. Her main argument about Britain was that the relative fluidity and unsettled nature of its attitudes to 'coloureds', and the absence of US-type Jim Crow laws and conventions to ensure racial segregation, had led to an unpredictable, insecure situation and 'negro disillusionment'. In this she followed the path already laid by black American journalist Roi Ottley in the account of his travels through Europe between 1944 and 1946 (Ottley 1952) in terms of both method and viewpoint. Both employ a gossipy journalistic style. Both are distinctly American authors who, despite liberal political positions, defend aspects of the racial status quo in US. Although she doesn't cite Everett Stonequist's work specifically, her ideas seem also to have been shaped by the influential American text *Marginal Man* on the psychological uncertainty of living between social worlds (Stonequist 1937). Landes argues repeatedly that negroes in the US *belong*, whereas in the UK they are marginalised. She seems unable to recognise the sociopolitical potential of the unboundaried British context.

Although at times she acknowledges that British xenophobia, where it exists, is directed at people from a range of national backgrounds and physical appearances, and that class and 'cultural capital' (as it was later to be called) play a major part in how far a foreign person is accepted by the host society, Landes is in general a good deal less optimistic about the future of race relations and 'integration' than are her colleagues in Edinburgh or her anthropologist friends in London. They, and many of the other authors of social comment and fiction writing about Britain at the time, see a much more varied picture consisting not only of hostility and neglect but also of hospitality and political support across the social spectrum (see eg James 1932; Cusack 1955; St John 1955, Glass 1960).

Landes' host and colleague, Kenneth Little, is one of the key theorists to stress the way social class interacts with skin colour:

Many attitudes displayed in Britain have their basis in 'class' as much as 'race'... The degree of respect and esteem given to an individual depends quite largely ...upon the way he wears his clothes; upon the style of his speech and the way he addresses another person; upon his deportment and general bearing; and, above all, upon the extent to which he displays confidence in himself. These are all attributes of 'class' in our society and they affect the social position of white as well as coloured people ... (Little 1972: x).

Sheila Webster (later Kitzinger) (1955), another Edinburgh colleague, makes a similar point about distinction in her study 'Negroes in Bluebrick' (ie Oxbridge), as does John St John in his engaging novel about the half West-African son of a British aristocrat (1955). British anthropologist Sally Chilver, Landes' close friend, also makes this argument in relation to Ghanaian students at Oxford.¹⁰ All draw attention to the way in which 'class' is able to override skin colour and cultural capital able to secure a good measure of belonging. Although Landes does make an attempt to engage with the nuances of British stratification and the continuum of British xenophobia, she seems to find these conventions largely unintelligible.¹¹

Perhaps the greatest strength of her work on 'colour' in Britain was her direct and unequivocal address of the issue of interracial sex and marriage which, in the UK context, occurred most frequently between white women (mostly British but also from other European countries) and black men (from the small seaport communities in Cardiff and Liverpool as well as the more recent groups of immigrants – workers and students – from the West Indies and African colonies). She points out that this type of miscegenation was a rare phenomenon in the world at the time and practically non-existent in US. She also noted – though not very approvingly – that the dominant pattern in UK had significant implications not only for race relations but also for gender relations. White women gained power vis-à-vis both black and white men in these social transactions. Their mixed children are inevitably differently located in the parental culture because largely absorbed into the extended white families of their mothers rather than into the black communities, as has been the case in the US.

Landes was particularly concerned about the circumstances of what she calls 'half-caste' children. Yet this is one of the themes where the limited nature of her methodological approach is most apparent because it seems that her source is the single case study I have already referred to, the Motley family, consisting of Arthur Motley, a black American endocrinologist, his white wife, Annette and their young adult daughter, also called Annette but who Landes calls Renée in her text, who live in Edinburgh. In all her manuscripts, Landes makes strong, lengthy and repeated claims about the marginalisation of half-castes in the UK. Yet most of her colleagues working in the same field, both black and white, are less preoccupied about the future of such children and less likely to make general claims on the basis of so little evidence.

¹⁰ For the full quote and more on Chilver see below.

¹¹ Margaret Mead wrote extensively about the cultural differences between the US and the UK as part of a programme to minimise misunderstandings in her wartime work for the US government (Mandler 2009).

The emphasis Landes gives to what she calls ‘biracialism’ (which she uses to describe a culture with populations of diverse origins as well as, in the US terminology of today, to point to individuals who are ‘racially’ mixed) and the pessimism with which she views the lot of children of mixed parentage, suggests not only the influence of US segregation culture and its attitudes to the ‘mulatto’, and the influence of thinkers such as Stonequist (1937), but also a personal agenda rooted in her own emotional history. It is of course not new to point out that all researchers bring a degree of prejudice to their materials and necessarily ask questions and interpret their findings from an already existing cultural viewpoint, but the Ruth Landes seems to do this with less self awareness than most, despite frequently deploying psychoanalytically-based interpretation in her writing and field notes. Her fictionalised recreation of her time at Fisk (see below) offers a clue to the dynamic involved. The three abortions that she openly acknowledged (Cole 2003) might also have played a part.

It is true nevertheless that the idea of the half-caste as uncategorisable, as neither one thing nor the other, as innocent victim, did seem to be a cause of anxiety during those years, even among many people with relatively liberal views on race and ‘miscegenation’, and sometimes continues to be so (Ifekwunigwe 2004). ‘Mongrelisation’, as Salman Rushdie (1991) has called the process, consists of an ‘intermingling’ not only of people but also ‘ideas, politics, movies, songs’ and represents a refutation of the ‘absolutism of the pure’. *‘Mélange ... is how newness enters the world... [It is about] change-by-fusion, change-by-conjoining’* (Rushdie 1991: 394). What matters is whether this newness and impurity is embraced and celebrated or resisted. The exceptional development in Britain over the following decades of ‘the capacity to live with difference’ and ‘rub along’ as Stuart Hall has variously put it (Hall 1993: 361) and the increasing ordinariness of children of mixed origin since the 1950s is one of the themes of *Visceral Cosmopolitanism* (Nava 2007).

There are other files among the Ruth Landes Papers in the Smithsonian Anthropological Archives which confirm Landes’ eccentric way of alighting on a topic and preparing herself for closer study. An example of this is her correspondence with friends and colleagues while developing an application (which was not successful) to the Canada Council for funding to do research on race relations between the rump of white colonisers and Africans in Kenya in the 1960s. By this time she had acquired a permanent job in Canada so was no longer obliged to shift from topic to topic as she had been earlier in her career, when employed on yearly contracts. What is interesting about this instance is her ignorance about the situation in Kenya and the apparent arbitrariness of her selection of place. She claims that Kenya has particularly good race relations and thinks that her fluency in Portuguese, acquired while in Brazil, will help her research the situation in this former British colony (PRSL Series 2 Box 46). Her friends – among them the anthropologist and Africanist, Audrey Richards, the black American Nobel Prize winner Ralph Bunche and Kenneth Little – put her right about the languages spoken and the state of race relations in Kenya, in some cases quite acerbically. Richards (who is also a friend of Sally Chilver’s) writes a long letter detailing Landes’ misconceptions and telling her that relations between Africans and Europeans in Kenya have never been worse. In these exchanges Landes is opportunistic and intuitive rather than scholarly. When the funding is refused she switches her attention to South Africa but is similarly ignorant about key issues. The anonymous reviewer of her application to the Canada Council in 1970 to study bilingualism in South Africa writes, ‘Dr

Landes should do a great deal more preliminary work on South Africa before she undertakes the study.’ And Landes again failed to look at a map before submitting her proposal. The reviewer points out that ‘Pretoria is not 165 miles east of Johannesburg but 35 miles north’ (PRSL Series 2 Box 46). Although not directly related to Landes’ work in Britain in the 1950s, the Kenya and South Africa proposals are nevertheless indicative of her mode of doing research, even late in her career.

The Smithsonian Institution archives and the Reed archives include several drafts – possibly four, all unpublished – of Landes’ fictionalised memoir about her time at Fisk in the late 1930s and her affair with esteemed black scholar Elmer C. Imes.¹² The last version was written after she got the job at McMaster University, probably in the 1970s or 1980s. All of them provide further insights into Landes’ views and subsequent research choices. However, Linda Perkins, another beneficiary of the Ruth Landes Memorial Research Fund (Perkins 2010) has expressed her reservations about the plausibility of the affair Landes describes, given the state of race relations in segregationist Tennessee at the time. Most of Landes’ correspondence with Imes seems to have been destroyed by Landes herself, according to a note appended to the Imes letters folder in NAASI. In the end, the ‘truth’ or not of the relationship is less significant than her narrative about transracial desire in the South and her enduring and obsessive commitment to this story. In one of the unnamed drafts of her Fisk novel she notes reflectively that ‘my two women teachers at Columbia ... said I was “neurotic” about Negroes’ (PRSL Series 3 Box 48 page 17). Landes’ earliest encounters with African Americans were through her father’s political contacts when she was still a girl. Her PhD was on black Jews in Harlem. This intellectual and personal interest was sustained throughout her career. Although, with hindsight, it could be understood as advanced, rather than ‘neurotic’, as Mead and Benedict seemed to think, it was nevertheless also deeply contradictory. Landes seems to have been more comfortable as transgressor of the demarcated boundaries in US than she was with the relative fluidity of the British context. This ambivalence permeates her UK manuscripts.

Among her other lovers was black Brazilian anthropologist Edison Carneiro. She was later engaged to one Mexican American and, in 1956, briefly married to another, Ignacio Lutero Lopez, who was editor of a Mexican periodical in California and leader of a successful desegregation challenge to the Supreme Court (Ocegueda 2010). Sally Cole says of Landes, ‘her open sexuality was firmly directed towards heterosexual relationships’ (2003: 12) and it is the case that she appears to have had quite a few. Her notebooks of the early 1950s refer to several lovers, among them ‘HM’, who was twice her age and had eccentric sexual preferences (Notebook V), and ‘SG’, possibly Sid Green, who ‘has left-wing interests’ and seems to have been married (Notebook IV). It is not clear what Cole is hinting at when she says ‘*open* sexuality’. Ruth Landes also seems to have had quite intense as well as enduring emotional relationships with women, specifically, judging from her extended correspondence, with Ruth Benedict and Sally Chilver, both of whom were known to have had lesbian as well as heterosexual relationships. Sally Chilver, who Landes met while on the Fulbright in UK and is still alive, has recently said that

¹² Although the drafts have different working titles and were written at different points of her career, the versions in the NAASI archive remain remarkably disordered (PRSL, Series 3 Boxes 48, 48 and 50 Manuscripts of Writings and Lectures). Some pages are numbered, others not; many are missing; different versions and top and carbon copies have been combined in one folder. Clues are provided by typewriter, paper (one version is typed on McMaster paper) and Landes’ own annotations. The versions held in the Reed office in New York have, in contrast, been organised.

Landes was extraordinarily beautiful.¹³ This combined with Landes' liberal modern sexual behaviour seems to have generated hostility towards her from some colleagues, among them notably Herskovits and, to a lesser extent, Margaret Mead (Cole 2003).

Landes was ahead of her time in terms of feminist academic issues as well. Franz Boas, eminent professor of anthropology at Columbia University in 1930s, was exceptional in his encouragement of his women students, and from the beginning Landes' work in Brazil and North America centre-stages questions of gender, sexuality and identity, as well as race, in innovative ways, as Cole has pointed out. She also fought her corner in career matters, though not very successfully – she was not to be appointed to a permanent job until the age of 57. The content of her work and the difficulties of her personal life have together earned her a supportive press with feminist anthropologists of the post-1969 generation (Cole 2002; Park and Park 1989) and this in part attracted me to follow up her work on Britain. However, as I spell out in more detail below, she was in fact quite ambivalent about (other) women who flouted social conventions.

On the basis of Sally Cole's description of Landes' academic interests, her family background, her difficulties in finding a permanent post and the year in which she came to the UK (Cole 2003), I initially speculated that, as well as being an early feminist, she might also have been a victim of the McCarthy purges. This was reinforced by Price (2004) who claims she was investigated by the FBI over a period of several years because of her association with Franz Boas and Edison Carneiro, both left activists, and because her father was a known union leader. However, the uninformed and clichéd references to 'communism' in her writing suggest that she was in fact ignorant of the lineaments of left critique and as fearful of communism as most US citizens. Progressive ideas and criticisms of US racism in, for instance, the *Manchester Guardian*, are dismissed by her as communist propaganda (Landes 1954: 217). She was certainly not unpatriotic, judging by her reiterated support for US race practices. Yet she was surrounded by people with longstanding associations with the left. Could her apparent political naïveté be an attempt to appease the American right and her funders? Was she fearful of never getting a job? I think that she probably was a victim of prejudice, but that her personal life and her interest in race issues, rather than her political ideology, were the factors that were considered controversial and that alerted the FBI.

It is appropriate, given my own research (Nava 2007) to ask whether Landes can be described as 'cosmopolitan'. In some ways certainly: both her parents were born outside the US, in Eastern Europe, so she was first generation American. She travelled widely and wrote about places and people from all over the world including – in addition to her main studies on indigenous peoples in Brazil and North America and her work on race in Britain – black Jews in Harlem, segregation and hierarchies of skin colour in the Deep South, the eastern European Jewish family, Mexican Americans, and bilingualism in Spain, Switzerland and South Africa. Her main emotional and sexual relations seem to have been with people from outside the socioethnic group of her parents. Yet despite these personal preferences, her detachment from and ambivalence about 'others' and other languages are present throughout much of this work. Her own command of Spanish was weak (cf letter written in it to Carneiro). Her Portuguese was

¹³ Communication to author via an email from Chilver's niece Lucia Graves.

probably not good either: she says in one of her responses to Carneiro that she knows he prefers her to write her letters in English. Her three pages of notes for a seminar on the 'Mexican male', overtly based on her husband Lutero Lopez (who had spent almost all his life in US) are disturbingly stereotyped (PRSL Box 60 Series 4 Teaching Materials) (See Fig 6 for first page). A lack of empathy runs through much of the work, despite the broad-spectrum curiosity she brought to bear on her subject matter. She is not a critic of nationalism and, as her ongoing attempts to return to US from Canada show, she remained an American at heart until the end.

Finally the question of her legacy: how did Landes manage, as an academic of relatively minor significance, to develop a foundation in her name and bequeath her papers to one of the most important archives in the world? The answer seems to be that she was both motivated and had the means. She had worked hard throughout her life and was disappointed that so much of her writing had remained unpublished and unrecognised. She had time to sort and annotate her papers due to her enforced retirement at the age of 67. She had no children of her own and had cut off relations with her brother's family, so appears to have had no one to whom to leave her money. Given her precarious career, it is surprising that she had any money to leave at all, but her notebooks provide a clue to this. In 1952 she wrote:

HM said he had \$35,000 to spend on me. When I mentioned this on Sat,
[undecipherable] said 'ask him to buy u a house' (Notebook IX 1952:112).

Thirty-five thousand dollars was a considerable amount in 1952. If this transaction did indeed take place and the money was invested in the financial market by her old friend and 'whiz of an investment broker' Salwyn Shufro, it is possible that she accumulated sufficient capital to set up her research fund.¹⁴ The Reed files in New York contain a sustained correspondence with her legal and financial advisors and executors, including Shufro. The anthropologist Vera Rubin, who was a student with Landes at Columbia, was responsible with her husband Samuel Rubin for establishing the Rubin Foundation. The Reed Foundation is an offshoot of the Rubin Foundation. Jane Gregory Rubin, Director and Secretary of the Reed Foundation, is Samuel and Vera's daughter-in-law. Landes gave detailed instructions about her wishes to Gregory Rubin and to the NAASI archivist James Glenn (Glenn and Wang 1992/2010). More research needs to be done on what is required by NAASI in order to establish an archive of personal papers. In Landes' case, the connections with Boas, Mead and Benedict, as well as her Ojibwa and Brazilian research, will probably have stood her in good stead, but the fact that she annotated and catalogued her own work was a source of some frustration for the NAASI archivists. The more general point is that Landes was determined that her work and name should live on beyond her death and effectively achieved this.

Being a beneficiary of funding from the Ruth Landes Memorial Foundation means that I have been a participant in this process and am now further contributing to the legacy. I am grateful for the opportunities the grant has offered and moreover acknowledge that I am using Ruth Landes and her work to advance my own research. But the situation is complicated. Landes was clearly an exceptional personality and a deeply committed anthropologist, who, in her work, dared to ask awkward questions and try out new methods. However, as I make clear in this

¹⁴ Correspondence with George and Alice Park, 31 Aug 1985, Landes Archive at the Reed Foundation.

report, her unpublished writing on race in Britain was really not very good and is no more worth publishing today than it was at the time it was written. Her intellectual contribution has regrettably not measured up to my hopes and is not easily accommodated in the framework set out in my initial application to the Reed Foundation. Nevertheless Landes as a person and her work are interesting insofar as they provide a prism through which to explore transformations in the 1950s in race and gender politics and in the development of race relations social science in the UK. Problems and unexpected findings often yield more textured, complex and productive outputs. So the time I have spent working on her papers has been eminently worthwhile. This report is intended not only as a contribution to the history of thinking about migration and race difference but also to narrative research, to our understanding of how research gets done (and funded) and the emotional and ethical investments involved in biographical writing.

3.2. Detailed Analysis of British Context and Manuscripts

3.2.1. The Research Environment

Ruth Landes seems to have become interested in British race issues as a result of her correspondence with British social anthropologist Kenneth Little, who had spent some time in 1949, after the publication of his book *Negroes in Britain* (1948), as a visiting scholar at Fisk. Little wrote to Landes complimenting her on her Brazilian work on *candomblé* and inviting her, as the correspondence progressed, to collaborate on a project on women in West Africa (PRSL Series 1 Box 2). In another letter, sent in 1950, when he was already established as Head of the Department of Anthropology at Edinburgh University, he mentions a Fulbright scholarship and suggests she apply. This would have been an attractive proposition for Landes, even though her research focus had hitherto been entirely on the Americas. She may at this point also have been encouraged by Margaret Mead, who had an established record of wartime research and publications on 'Anglo-American Relations' and the 'British Character' (Mandler 2009). There were probably push factors for Landes as well. In the late 1940s she was not employed and had returned to live with her parents in New York City. She had also become the object of FBI scrutiny as a suspected subversive because of her association with left-wingers and even her style of dress (Price, 2004: 230). Gossip about her personal appearance and her sexual behaviour seem to have been quite commonplace. Her referees for the Fulbright were Kenneth Little, Charles Johnson (President of Fisk) and Margaret Mead. Mead, after some only moderately supportive comments about Landes' professional suitability, wrote spitefully:

I think I should add that Dr. Landes is considerably better looking and more attractive than many of her sex who seek academic careers and that this circumstance may be looked at not without acrimony by both male and female colleagues (Cole 2003: 233).

Landes was furious but the comment seems not to have affected the Fulbright committee adversely and in 1951 she was awarded the fellowship and went to Edinburgh.

It is not clear how much of her time was spent in Edinburgh and how much in London, nor what her research consisted of; the NAASI Box 20 on British Race Relations contains very few documents of any kind. We do know that Little's department was intellectually innovative

and dynamic. He was successful in raising research funds and attracted to the department an energetic group of largely politicised young scholars including Michael Banton, Alexander Carey, Sydney Collins (from Jamaica), Violaine Junod (from South Africa), Eyo Bassey N'dem (from Nigeria), Sheila Patterson, Anthony Richmond and Sheila Webster (later Kitzinger) (see Bibliography) who were committed to equality and policy reform as well as a different kind of anthropological scholarship (Bloom 1972; Mills 2008; Rich 1990). Little's book, *Negroes in Britain*, was the first serious examination of Britain's black urban populations and ahead of its time theoretically and in terms of its politics. Its focus on historical and economic determinants and questions of inequality and class in relation to race explicitly critiqued the conventions of anthropological conceptual frameworks and methodology (Little 1948 [1972]; Mills 2008). As noted above, Little was married to a Jamaican woman and his partisanship was unequivocal from the start. In the preface to the reprint of his book he writes:

As a human being and a private citizen I am personally humiliated and shamed by the indignities to which West Indians and others are sometimes subjected, but my belief as a social anthropologist is that race relations research has its contribution to make to the general understanding of society (Little 1972: viii – ix).

Junod, Patterson and Webster were all also committed anti-racists (in the terminology of today), as I describe in my grant application (above) and Chapter 6 of my book (Nava 2007). Similar statements of conviction to Little's accompanied the writings of Banton, Carey and Richmond.¹⁵ It was in this milieu that Landes arrived in 1951. How she will have fitted in, it is hard to say.

As is spelled out below, her 1952 publications show that from the beginning of her time in the UK she considered the security of Jim Crow segregationist regimes in the US preferable to the UK situation because it ensured that people, black and white, knew where they stood. This view persisted, often against the evidence, and may well have contributed to disagreements with her Edinburgh colleagues, even though they cited her work. On the whole they were a good deal less anxious than she was about the lack of predictability of race relations in Britain and they certainly did not defend the status quo in North America, which was defined by Patterson (1963) and others as a 'pigmentocracy' similar in structure to apartheid in South Africa. Landes' apparent patriotism in regarding these issues is a recurring feature of her work. Whether she actually believed it or whether it served in part as a defence in the profoundly paranoid culture of the USA in the early 1950s is difficult to assess. It could well be that the damaging accusations made against her by anthropologists in the US, combined with the investigations of by the FBI, made her cautious about appearing too much of a radical. Perhaps she was also concerned not to offend her funders – the Fulbright Foundation. There is certainly no evidence in her writing that she was a committed socialist or communist.

All this notwithstanding, Cole (2003) makes the point that Landes was happy to get away from New York and enjoyed her time in Britain. Disagreements with Edinburgh colleagues may have contributed to her growing connection to a network of distinguished, upper-middle-class, elite London and Oxford-based anthropologists whose field-work experiences and general conceptual and methodological approach were probably more compatible with her own.

¹⁵ For instance Richmond states in his author note on the cover of his book that 'the Society of Friends' traditional concern for social justice and for human right, irrespective of colour, class or creed, has inspired much of his work' (Richmond 1954).

Principal among her new friends was Sally Chilver, with whom Landes developed life-long correspondence, and Chilver's friends Phyllis Kaberry and Audrey Richards. Chilver, who was an Africa specialist, a member of the influential Colonial Social Science Research Council and later Principal of Oxford University women's college Lady Margaret Hall (and also Robert Graves' niece)¹⁶ was also often the unnamed eloquent and analytical correspondent cited by Landes in her 'Color in Britain' manuscripts. The historian of British anthropology Adam Kuper has said that, although married, Chilver was known to be the lover of Phyllis Kaberry. She was very close to Landes as well, as their letters indicate. It is clear that Landes' charm, vivacity, curiosity and rebelliousness were much appreciated in London anthropological circles (Cole 2003: 232-3). Sally Chilver not only liked Landes, she also influenced her work. Her views were less radical than Landes' colleagues in the north.

3.2.2. '*Color in Britain MS II Summary*'

The most substantial unpublished manuscript among Landes' papers is 'Color in Britain: A Study in Emerging Biracialism' (NAASI PRSL, Box 48) (Landes 1954). The full package, divided into three files, includes a 20-page separate essay entitled 'Colour in Britain MS II Summary' (Landes 1952d). This was probably a preliminary report, not a summary, based on her initial observations and written before the main manuscript and before having thoroughly read the published work of her new colleagues in Edinburgh. Although undated in the archive I estimate that it was written in 1952 and probably served as the groundwork for her address to the Royal Anthropological Institute, London and the short article in *Man* (Landes 1952a and 1952c). It uses some of the same terms and quotes.

The piece raises some original questions about miscegenation, but on the whole is poorly-organised, unreferenced and contains many unsubstantiated assertions. The methodology and research objectives are not specified. Landes exposes her ignorance not only about the relevant literature on her topic but also the broader political issues. She seems unfamiliar with the history of the British Empire and Commonwealth and only vaguely aware of the circumstances of Caribbean immigrants to the UK and the funding of passages by the British government, or the contributing push factors of unemployment and new immigration restrictions to US. She seems to know little at this stage about the history of black American GIs in UK between the years 1942-1945 or about the attempted imposition by the US Army Command of US segregation practices on the British during the war. She too often collapses distinctions between West Indians and Africans and between immigrants and already established black communities.

Her terminology is idiosyncratic. She calls the UK 'the kingdom', as though the abbreviated version of USA, 'the States', is applied in a similarly abbreviated way to the UK context. More significantly, she claims that black people, even North American blacks, are called 'colonials' in Britain, and that the term 'negro' is not used. Yet this assertion is not corroborated by any of the other scholarly or literary works of the period. The term 'colonial' is not an indicator of skin colour and its colloquial use as a noun encompasses also, for instance, white Australians. Moreover, it refers to a historical relationship with the colonies and former colonies,

¹⁶ Cole erroneously calls Chilver 'Chilvers' and says she was a historian (Cole 2003: 234). In fact she was an anthropologist.

so cannot apply to the established black and mixed populations of the port towns or to black Americans. Landes also uses the term ‘half-caste’ (1952d: 12). Yet her Fulbright mentor Kenneth Little uses neither term in his seminal text. He explicitly uses the terms ‘coloured’ or ‘negro’ to refer both to the new migrants from Africa and the Caribbean and to the port populations. His 1948 book is called *Negroes in Britain*. In it he points out that: “The term ‘half-caste’ is generally eschewed ... All persons possessing a dark colour, or any African blood, prefer as a rule to be referred to simply as ‘coloured’ ” (Little 1972 [1948]: 141). Jamaican sociologist Sydney Collins uses the term ‘Anglo-coloured’ (1951). For neither is being of mixed parentage or ‘British born-coloured’ as significant a disadvantage as it appears to be for Landes.

At this early stage of her research Landes is already reluctant to believe that some migrants prefer the situation in the UK to the US:

Especially West Indians love to wave the Union Jack if they have lived in U.S. In Manchester an unemployed black worker prated [sic] to me, ‘man, in England there is freedom. No Jim Crow here. It ain’t like Florida, Alabama, Maryland or even New York. I’m *free* here!’ (Landes 1952d: 3)

She claims that this is usually not the case, despite the number of mixed relations she has observed and the claims of the migrants themselves. For instance she refers without irony to the ‘general American disposition to befriend Negroes’ and suggests that (white) Americans and South Africans are less prejudiced than the British because more ‘familiar with the sight and humanity of Negroes’ despite legal barriers to integration (1952d: 10). A recurring source of confusion for her in this and subsequent studies is British class hierarchy and the fact that black outsiders are positioned according to their social origins, power, wealth, education and style of being, rather than simply according to the colour of their skin.¹⁷ So, she argues that ‘Negro migrants are assimilated to the least of the lower class’ and have relations with women of the ‘lowest class’ (1952d: 7) yet she was already aware of a number mixed couples from across the class spectrum who are clearly not of the ‘lowest’ class, or marginalised. Apart from the Littles and the Motleys, high profile couples in 1951 included Ruth Williams and Seretse Khama (later president of Botswana) and Peggy Cripps (daughter of Sir Stafford Cripps) and Joseph Appiah (president of the West African Students Union in UK).¹⁸

The status of this 20-page document is not clear. Whatever its intended function, it clearly anticipates the subsequent manuscripts in a number of ways. Here and later Landes’ standpoint is firmly North American. It is apparent that, unlike the other researchers in the field, her intention is to offer the North American reader a picture of the distinctive nature of British race relations and make comparisons with the situation in the US. The paper is also an example of her intellectual style: her mode of researching and her general lack of caution in engaging in debate.

¹⁷ She is inconsistent and at times does attempt to make this distinction on behalf of the American reader..

¹⁸ Princeton professor Kwame Anthony Appiah, author of a book on cosmopolitanism (2006), is their son.

3.2.3. *'Color in Britain: A Study In Emerging Biracialism'*

The main manuscript of 'Color in Britain: A Study In Emerging Biracialism' consists of 330 pages (NAASI PRSL Box 48) (Landes 1954).¹⁹ Although undated in the archive, it was completed after June 1954 (based on the citation of an article by Michael Banton in the *Times* and other 1954 publications) and was clearly intended for publication. Landes refers several times in the text to 'this book' but, despite searching in the New York and Washington archives, I was unable to track any correspondence with publishers or reader reviews, or any other exchange with colleagues about it. Although Sally Cole suggested that it was intended for Oxford University Press, neither the UK nor the US OUP offices have any record of the submission in their archives.

By now it is clear that Landes has carefully read the work of her colleagues in Little's Edinburgh department and draws on it extensively, even though some of it is still unpublished. In addition to Kenneth Little's own book (1948), she cites the on-going research of Michael Banton (1954), the Bow Group (1952), Alexander Carey (1956), Sydney Collins (1951 and 1957), Madeleine Kerr (1952), Eyo Bassey N'dem (1953), Anthony Richmond (1954) and Sheila Webster (1955). The writing of these authors is sometimes quoted for one or two full pages at a time (see for instance Landes 1954: 17). Landes also draws extensively on personal exchanges and written correspondence with people whom she does not name, but who, judging from the writing style and opinions, are probably Sally Chilver and, to a lesser extent, Phyllis Kaberry or perhaps Audrey Richards.

As with the 'Summary' (1952d) the work is very uneven. Some of it is quite proficient, but, unlike the authors she draws on, she does not spell out her own methodological, terminological or conceptual approaches and concerns. The quality declines when she reverts to her own voice with its familiar style of assertion and unsubstantiated generalisation. Much of the manuscript is exasperatingly impressionistic and anecdotal. It is also poorly organised, repetitious and far too long. There are occasional bits that are reasonably well argued, mostly those based on her colleagues' research. She does occasionally have a fairly subtle set of observations but her obsessions tend to obscure the more considered passages.

It is surprising, again, to note her recurrent defence of US attitudes towards blacks, which at times seems to extend even to Jim Crow legislation. There are constant references to North Americans as a generic 'we' or 'us', as though there were no differences of opinion about race issues. This is not the rhetorical 'we' linking author to reader. She feels that the British and 'colonials' are anti-American and so is defensive. Her generalisations about US blacks are just as ill-considered as those about the UK; see for example her claim that: 'In our country all Negroes are considered alike. In Britain they are considered alike to the extent that they are aliens' (Landes 1954: 76). Yet among her friends and correspondents are black American professors who have little in common with the black rural population of the Deep South. Her reluctance to acknowledge sociopolitical divisions between black Americans is baffling.

¹⁹ The manuscript has been divided into three sections. The pages of the original, held at the Smithsonian, and the copy in the New York Reed office, although numbered, are randomly ordered because the practice of the archivists is to leave documents in the way they are received.

In the chapter entitled 'Mixed Marriage' (1954: 111–166), Landes tries at length and sometimes with some insight to unravel the contradictions of miscegenation in Britain. She legitimately points to the loneliness of some mixed couples who are rejected by others in the community. But her main concern here as elsewhere is for the 'half-caste' children of mixed couples whom she perceives as the greatest victims:

It appears that Negro half-castes are wasted social stuff in Britain, entirely dispensable; in U.S. they are, with their antecedents and descendants, valuable 'Negroes' (1954: 157).

Half-castes, Landes argues, don't belong, unlike their often 'rebellious' and 'eccentric' white mothers, nor are they considered 'sexually alluring' like the 'colonial father' (1954: 157). This is particularly the case, she claims, for half-caste women born in UK who are more likely to move, if they have the means, to the US or the Caribbean where, according to her, there are more men of their class. But there is no foundation to this thesis because black and mixed-race men of all social groups outnumber women in UK during this period and numbers are constantly growing. It is tempting to speculate about the roots of Landes' anxiety about half-castes, which permeates the manuscript, because her concerns seem to have so little rational or empirical basis. Could it be that one or more of her three admitted abortions were justified on these grounds? (Cole 2003)

Chapter 5 is called 'Half-Caste' and continues the discussion. The argument, as before, but here put a little more succinctly, is that: 'Perhaps their principal natural handicap is that half-castes are not a self-selected grouping of adults, like the colonial immigrants, and the Britons choosing to marry them.' (1954: 167). In the supporting narrative she returns to the 'mulatto' daughter of the Motleys, whom she calls Renée, and describes as 'humiliated with self-hate' because of the texture of her hair and the colour of her skin (1954: 168). That remains the dominant tone of the chapter. She draws again on the work of Edinburgh-based colleagues, none of whom are as pessimistic as she. They include Collins whose research on mixed couples (Collins 1951) was done primarily in the established mixed port communities of Cardiff, Liverpool and Tyneside in the 1940s, and Little, whose book was based on research done mainly in the 1930s. Another colleague whose work she cites is Richmond who explores regional differences in how mixed-race children are accommodated: 'the Liverpoolian coloured were a distinct group of attractive young people ... twice a boy of Negro descent had been appointed Head Boy of one of the schools'. Landes quotes him (Landes 1954: 183-4) but seems unable to accept his or others' more optimistic accounts:

A fact shaped unmistakably through the varied data coming my way, despite the different usages of English, despite the British denials, of invidious race categories, that the 'half-caste' in popular thought belonged in the category of 'coloured' or Negro, just as in the US the mulatto is merged in status with the Negro... (Landes 1954: 184-5).

There is of course something in this but she wants it to be the main story, the dark underside of the fact of so much intermarriage between white women and black men. She feels that the 'tragedy' of 'half-castes' is that they feel half white and native Britons but their appearance means that they are assumed to be 'foreign'. They do not belong anywhere, either with the white community or with 'colonials':

I doubt that any half-caste would pretend color to be other than a great social liability despite the contrary insistence of many white mothers, and many wives of colonials... I knew one middle-class woman who insisted proudly that no one ever noticed the brown skin of her highly respected husband, and the fairer skin of their daughter, with the result that the daughter developed anguished doubts and fears about every relationship she entered (Landes 1954: 190-191).

This is again a reference to the Motleys. Landes is convinced that Renée Motley's adolescent discontent arises from her socio-racial not-belonging. She refuses to accept the account of Mrs Motley who plausibly claims that, in the case of her black American endocrinologist husband, class overrides skin colour. Landes attempts to argue that the family experience demonstrates a degree of social pathology and denial about race that can be applied more generally to the condition of half-castes in Britain.

In a more convincing argument, Landes points to a significant difference between the US and the UK:

The contrast between the classic American situation and the nascent British one can be summarized by saying that there are two constants: the dominance of the white element, the low prestige of the Negro; and that these face significant variants. The variants are that in Britain ... there are only few Negroes ... and that the white partners are lower-class women. In the U.S. ... the white partners ... have been chiefly furtive men of the upper-class who could define their relationships irresponsibly... In Britain ... the white woman goes out to meet the Negro man who desires responsibility, and supports him in efforts to fit into the white man's world (Landes 1954: 211).

This is indeed the essence of the difference between the US and the UK and she slowly and circuitously gets there, although she remains circumspect about what she thinks are the more optimistic and 'idealized impressions of Collins and others'. It is relevant to point out here that Sydney Collins was himself black, from Jamaica, but she can't agree with him. She is convinced that 'half-castes' can only find 'a life' in a country with a larger black population – such as the West Indies, the US or Africa.

So she is contradictory. It would help if she were able to perceive the situation in a more historically contingent way. Britain in the postwar period also received several hundred thousand refugees and displaced people from Europe, so black migrants were not the only foreigners. While many people in Britain were not particularly welcoming to anyone from abroad, others were (Nava 2007 and 2013). Landes however cannot see this and cannot imagine that the relative openness of some sectors of the UK population is a harbinger of a better, more progressive, less racist, society.

Chapter 6 is called 'The Successes' but the title of this chapter bears little relation to the content. Landes not only repeats information and opinions already expressed in earlier chapters but also offers up the same gloomy criticisms. So, for instance she points out again that West Indian and African men were often lonely and didn't have social relations with the British. In a chapter on 'the successes' it would have been more appropriate to refer to the many counter examples, among them, for instance, the growing number of 'racial unity' and other pro-

integration groups attended by people like Peggy Stafford Cripps (later Appiah) (Glass 1960; Nava 2007 and 2013). Landes' good friend Sally Chilver, whom she so often quotes, is in fact a good deal less pessimistic than she is. In one of her letters to Landes, Chilver writes:

My Ghana boys sent me their report on their stay in Oxford. No prejudice encountered, they say. Naturally not, their accents and dress proclaimed them to landladies as black gentlemen, & the fact they were Ghanaians was an asset. They strongly recommended repetition of the Oxford experiment ... and said they were taught to think and to mix.... By and large I don't think colour prejudice in the UK is likely to be a major problem, unless there are big recessions (Chilver to Landes, undated, Box 2, Series 1) (Fig 7).

But Landes does not quote this. The truth is that she is not particularly interested in the successes. This chapter is again an unedited, unstructured and often incoherent stream of consciousness. There is nothing new in the broad thrust of the work, which emphasises again the hardship of many migrants and ignorant prejudice of many British. She concludes, 'The individual colored successes in Britain do not point to any stabilizing trend in domestic biracialism ... like half-castes they have often considered leaving' (Landes 1954: 245).

Landes calls her Chapter 7 'The English'. This is despite her formal connection to the University of Edinburgh and the residence of her two subject families in Scotland, and despite the fact that one of the largest and most settled black communities in the 1950s was in Cardiff, Wales. Her lack of precision is no longer a surprise and Landes moves without distinction between the terms 'British' and 'English', in her attempt to identify the relevant aspects of the society she is studying. Her sources, on which she draws indiscriminately, consist of writings from a wide range of historical moments, provenance and levels of sophistication, authored by historians of Victorian Britain, journalists, novelists and anonymous friends. The conclusion is a description of the character of the English/British and their attitudes to 'coloured' migrants of the most general and superficial kind. There is no systematic discussion of contemporary political debates about issues such as citizenship, decolonisation, national independence, civil rights and anti-discrimination legislation.

This is the broad framework of the chapter. Landes opens by reiterating her conviction that the fluidity of British race relations is a disadvantage and making an astonishingly provocative and contentious statement about slavery, intended presumably to assert once more the superiority of race relations in the US. She writes:

Unfortunately ... for the cause of common understanding, there has been no institutionalization of slavery on the British Isles, so that instead of master-type patronage of dependents, Negroes encounter the scorn of a people still acting like world rulers (Landes 1954: 246).

Based on discussions with some of her interviewees, she also claims that slavery would have been a solution in British colonial Africa: 'the Kenya situation would have been resolvable if there had been a long history of domestic slavery' (1954: 252). These controversial claims are based on the conviction that clearly demarcated boundaries are better for all concerned. She thinks that Africans are deluded by the blurring of distinctions and the rhetoric of justice and citizenship into believing that they will be accepted. Africans and Caribbeans are not able to assimilate – unlike

the Jews, she argues²⁰ (1954: 251). Interestingly she does note that migration and colonial nationalism are forcing Britain to expand from 'traditional insularity to cosmopolitanism' (1954: 247) but this observation remains undeveloped and moreover inconsistent with other aspects of her argument.

Despite her own professional and personal life and her academic interest in gender she appears to have little sympathy for the independence of her women subjects:

In British society [authority] belongs to men by virtue of their sex and can never be alienated by any woman's action. This adds further resentment to the woman's mixed marriage.... She took the initiative without authority, without precedent, without concern for the prestige of her family, and so acted irresponsibly. From her action flows the attribution of irresponsibility to the husband (1954: 263).

The chapter includes many unattributed quotes (as always) but here they are quite extensive and detailed and presented in quote marks though without source. She hints that they come from upper-class women correspondents and 'my friend'. This is often Sally Chilver, as has already been pointed out (see their correspondence in PRSL Box 2 Series 1).

What Landes ends up describing is an intricately stratified society in class terms, with which few would disagree. But in general she appears uninterested in political differences of opinion and practice and does not distinguish between left and right, modernisers and traditionalists, between progressive anti-racist anti-imperialist thinkers and conservative defenders of Empire and the status quo. This was a time of extensive debate in Britain but social differences between different sectors of the population go mostly unremarked. Landes' lack of attention to these elements could be attributed to her anthropological training and its disciplinary focus on settled and relatively homogenous communities and on her method of ethnographic observation and submersion. Nonetheless, towards the end of this overly-detailed and contradictory chapter, she does, quite ambitiously, try to establish some conclusions about the broader picture (1954: 305-6). She recognises that there is a link between race, class and gender issues and that mixed relationships affect, and indeed transform, all three:

The nascent race issues conceal a more basic one of threatened male pre-eminence in the family and class-organization, insofar as the women usually marry upon their private initiative, without family or public approval (Landes 1954: 305).

Although not perceived in this way at that stage, the actions of these women challenge existing gender hierarchies and hence represent a kind of proto-feminism. But this is not appreciated.

Landes' Chapter 8, 'Comparisons of Color Relationships' is an attempt to unravel and identify the specificities of race relations in four key 'biracial' societies, the US, Brazil, South Africa and the UK and is a great deal better than the work produced for the earlier chapters. Her most interesting and relevant conclusions (in relation to the UK), expressed here more incisively as well as in a more nuanced way, are as follows:

²⁰ She seems to think that there was not much anti-semitism in UK until the interwar 'large-scale arrival of Central European Jews. She is here as elsewhere embarrassingly wrong.

Officially there are no Negroes in Britain ... The census does not identify color.... They are lumped among the mass of 'colored' or 'blacks' who come from Asia, Africa and even the darker parts of Europe... the notion of 'color' is not at all the precise thing it is to Americans but it contains three features: a visual one... a cultural one... and a judgment [about inferiority] (1954: 308).

So, although Kenneth Little uses the word 'negro' in his title (Little 1948), Landes is attempting here to mark an institutionalised and conceptual distinction.

British 'color bar', unlike American 'Jim Crow', is unacknowledged and unsystematic ... It is not a test of civil rights, like ... Jim Crow; rather it stresses who are 'inside' and who are 'outside' the society (1954: 314).

She asserts once more – indeed ad nauseam – what she perceives as the complex but unifying sense of belonging to the nation that American negroes have, in contrast to the experience of 'coloureds' in Britain. In the US: 'Negroes feel and are generally regarded as culturally one with whites and culturally distinct from Negroes elsewhere, though they resent American whites for inequities' whereas 'Negroes in Britain are of diverse cultural origins' and are considered and feel like outsiders and foreigners (1954: 314). But, in this concluding chapter she also steps back somewhat from her case studies and ethnographic approach and tries, appropriately, to imagine the implications of the patterns of migration and the large-scale, rapid historical transformations which she is witnessing:

The present Negro migration, unprecedented in world history, marks a stage in the modification of British insularity. Colonials have rights of entry and citizenship (1954: 318).

But then she goes on again with uneven, contradictory and meandering observations and conclusions that seem to indicate thinking aloud, rather than carefully considered conclusions.

Her main objective in the book is to point to and analyse the ways colour signifies differently in the UK from the US, yet paradoxically she doesn't say much about the race situation in America. Despite her experience at Fisk University in 1938, she says very little about the black professional and middle classes or about progressive political organizations like the NAACP. She doesn't talk about historical change or political struggle or the range of attitudes amongst whites as well as blacks in relation to race questions. There is little discussion of segregation and 'prejudice'. Her argument is, as I have already pointed out, that US negroes 'belong', even if in a subjugated position, and, even more contentiously, that that is preferable to the relative marginalisation of 'coloured' migrants in the UK.

Although we don't know about Landes' attempts to publish this manuscript or what her colleagues or publishers' readers thought of it, we do know she was not successful either in the US or the UK. She seems to have consulted Ken Little towards the end of 1957, about three years after the work was completed. In a letter to her dated 25th November 1957 he replies: 'No, I don't think that much can be done at the British end about your book. The market is too glutted. It is a pity. But it is unduly pessimistic to regard the book as shelved. There may be ways

in which an opportunity will develop' (PRSL Box 4 Correspondence). But that is it. He is not very encouraging. Nevertheless, she has another go.

3.2.4. '*British Color in Perspective*'

Ruth Landes' revised draft is called '*British Color in Perspective*' (NAASI Box 47, Series 3, Writings) and, at 136 pages, is not only a much shorter version but also more succinct, better organised and better written. However, it contains many of the weaknesses of the earlier draft in terms of argument, use of terminology, limited range of sources and erroneous information. Moreover and more seriously, although probably completed in 1959,²¹ it takes little account of the major transformation that have taken place on both sides of the Atlantic in relation to civil rights in the intervening period. It is appropriate to stress, as she does, the continuing xenophobia of large sections of the British population, but, by the late 1950s, Caribbean and other postwar migrants are also far more settled and accepted than they were at the beginning of the decade. This is despite the 1958 disturbances in Notting Hill. The numbers of women immigrants from the Caribbean have increased dramatically, but so have the numbers of mixed black and white relationships and Landes' claim that 'middle class white women marry a coloured immigrant with the object of settling in the man's country of origin' is completely untrue – if it were ever the case.

It is worth contrasting Landes' '*British Color in Perspective*' with the work of Ruth Glass' *London's Newcomers: The West Indian Migrants*, (1960), which was written about the same time as Landes' new draft, because it shows that the dated and idiosyncratic feel of Landes' work cannot be explained away by locating it in a particular historical moment. Glass's book, based on much more solid research, points repeatedly to the complexity of the situation.²² Although also a foreigner (she was a refugee from 1930s Berlin and a senior research officer at Columbia University in New York from 1940-42) she writes with far more investment and commitment than Landes. Like several other writers on the broad topic (eg Little, Richmond, Webster and Banton) she unequivocally declares her antiracism:

I am not dispassionate on this subject. I share 'the very definite opinion ... [that] discrimination because of race, colour or religion is an intolerable insult to the dignity of an individual' ... and to the society in which it is practiced. This is my premise' (Glass 1960: xi).

She is also more analytical about her terms, for instance:

Many of the words which have to be used because no others are available are highly ambiguous, emotionally loaded or simply wrong. They tend to have a dichotomous, 'we' and 'they' connotation. The word 'colour' is an obvious example. The word 'British' has to be used when we mean 'local' people, though of course the West Indians are British too. 'Migrant' is a defective substitute for the even less suitable word 'immigrant'. The

²¹ The manuscript does not have a date but she refers to publications and other events of 1959 (Landes 1959: 123).

²² This argument is developed further in Nava 2013.

terms ‘race’, ‘racial’ or ‘race relations’ are worst of all: ‘race’ is not a scientifically valid category (Glass 1960: xiii).²³

Glass points to the transformations in understanding and accommodation that have taken place between indigenous people and West Indian migrants over the preceding decade. She also stresses the ambivalence and fluidity of people’s responses:

Within most professional circles and especially in universities, there do not appear to be nowadays any serious difficulties in the social relationships between coloured and white people. In that respect, recent experience certainly does not tally with the circumstances reported ... in 1952 (Glass 1960: 106-7).

The distinctiveness [of the migrant] often causes antagonism; but it also frequently evokes ardent sympathy. [It produces] vehement reactions, negative and positive (Glass 1960: 3).

As Kenneth Little wrote to Landes, the field had become glutted. But the new work was not only more scholarly and nuanced, it was also more up to date. So Landes’ second draft was not to be published either. Her earlier observations and style of writing were often inappropriate even at the beginning of the 1950s, as I have shown. By the end of the decade they were barely relevant. This is not to deny the continuing fact of xenophobia and racism, but, as Glass and many others pointed out, the landscape of black-white relations had changed immeasurably. This was the case not only in the fields of housing, education, law and politics but also in personal relationships and the culture of everyday life. Black and white authors described the new encounter in fiction, theatre, film and journalism. Academics founded new university departments and new journals to discuss the issues. Britain recognised itself increasingly as a multicultural and multiracial society, albeit, in some quarters, unwillingly. There was no question for most of its new citizens of flight to some imagined better place, as Landes had argued.

And as for ‘half-castes’, Britain today lives comfortably with the most mixed – the most mongrel – society in the modern western world. It is estimated that the rate of intermarriage is at least ten times higher than the European average and at least twenty times higher than in the US (Parker and Song 2001). An astonishing 10% of children nationally, not just in London, are born into a ‘mixed-race’ family (Platt 2009). Differences of skin colour and racial origin, although still noted, are a routine part of British urban culture and no longer considered an obstacle to cohabitation or marriage by the vast majority of the population. Being ‘mixed race’ is, in certain contexts, as much a social asset as a disadvantage. Landes, like many others of her generation, could not have imagined such an outcome. Her work is valuable precisely because it sheds light on the contradictory prognoses of the early 1950s.

Landes also offered a distinctive American voice. Although she was not the only one of her peers in the field to have been born outside Britain (others include Sydney Collins, Ruth Glass, Marie Jahoda, Violaine Junod, Eyo N’dem) she was the only one whose intellectual and political concerns and target readership were clearly those of her ‘home’ country. Moreover,

²³ These terms have been re-interrogated since the 1960s, see for instance Paul Gilroy’s and others’ ‘strategic essentialism’ and the reclaiming of the term ‘race’.

despite her left-wing background and her controversial personal-romantic relationships with black and Mexican Americans at a time when 'racial' segregation and Jim Crow laws were still widespread in the US, Landes' unpublished manuscripts on the situation in Britain show that she remained firmly and surprisingly loyal to mainstream American attitudes. A generous reading of her viewpoint is that she experienced a disconcerting uncertainty with the more open structure of race relations in UK, in which it was relatively commonplace for non-white migrant men to have white indigenous women as partners. For her, the legacy of slavery in US and the relative clarity provided by laws prohibiting integration and intermarriage seem to have been preferable to the unpredictable nature of the UK situation. In this her work is at odds with that of her peers in Edinburgh and London who, with varying degrees of optimism or pessimism, explored the welcoming as well as xenophobic attitudes of the British. As Ruth Glass noted, responses to the new migrants ranged from antagonistic to ardently sympathetic (Glass 1960: 3). The fluidity of attitudes to race difference – the uncertainty which so troubled Landes – was on the whole interpreted as progressive rather than a problem.

So the enigma of Ruth Landes' work inheres in the contradiction between her apparently liberal attitudes and experiences in the US and her discomfort in the UK world of race relations. Despite her appetite for intellectual engagement, her attempt at cross-cultural comparison, and her prescience and boldness in addressing questions about gender and its relation to race, her work in general remains firmly embedded in a rather conservative north American political framework. This significantly reduces its relevance for a UK readership. The problematic orientation of her work is moreover compounded by its scholarly shortcomings. So altogether it is not surprising that it remained unpublished and neglected.

Race, Society, Culture and Personality: Cases of Motley and Little, both socially "successful" at great private cost; with real rewards and intimidations. They are mirror opposites of each other re race and society.

Color in Scotland 1951
(Fulbright grantee) PL

1. Subject / Setting	2. Setting	3. Goal /	4. Movement-Decision/Personality	5. Personality
L. y, m., N/	deep South / S of Baptist preacher, untutored & conventional.	Opportunity, white	Escape phys. & mrrg to wh he is forced as later socialized Insurance Plan forces citizenship. Mrrg gives white family.	Self-determined choice (vs. passv. or rigid, or neurotic acts.)
y, f., Eur./U.K.	Scotland F deserted. M domestic; drink. S. a shop ass't. Si bcms schl-mistress.	- l.cl./ rise to m.cl.	thru <u>aliens</u> at International House & other foreign students' "displaced" meetings. Then pregnant, & compels mrrg, thru threats of publicity (déportation) & appeals to upbringing.	"
D, 1/2-caste/	U.K., m.cl., i.e. reached #2 from Ps' #5.	/recognition in m.cl. /Discover own <u>identity</u> in place of birth - vs. Bs' <u>upward</u> struggle.	/a) escape out, 1k F; /by prssr on M's fear of l.cl. acts (assoc. with Africans; pregnant threat) & F's fear of her art career. b) Norwegi fiance, after discovering own self in U.S.. Then c) <u>returns</u> home, accepts Ps' choice as own, & a) marries <u>out</u> to Norwegi, wh., m.cl.	"

D sd Ps never fought each other but let aggressions out on her, the D. Clrl they cd not risk fighting ea other, when W might explode with "nigger" as Scots do; & he might retaliate to her loss. W indulges humorously his Scots' Covenanter commitments, following UK war honors and citizenship.

This family is not a homogen. entity: it is 3 socially diff. persons, with diff. but not conflicting social & personal goals, under one roof. The Ps united in an alliance determined by their profoundest social needs. The one roof makes it a mrrg. In the old sense, it is functions as "arranged". The ~~xxxx~~ gamble vastly greater in the marriage than in the parental bond. Her feeling is mr freely expressed in the p- bond and the tie more steadily abused, from D's standpoint.

This mrrg has real rewards in the fulfill, of separate goals (m. to bcm white; f. to become m. cl.). These are insured by real threats latent in evasion of responsibility, i.e. N m. cd lose white affil.
 Eur.f. " " m. cl. (of mrrg to M.D.)

Fig 2: 'Race, Society, Culture and Personality: Cases of Motley and Little' (1951).
 Ruth Landes Papers, British Race Relations File, National Anthropological Archive Smithsonian Institution.

In Edenburgh 1950-1
"on Fulbright Study" 1.
"Colonial history" to H/C

Motley.

- a) The young man's journey to Edinburgh with other young Negro men rebelling against U.S. restrictions, was converted into the opportunity for
- b) the young woman to exploit, to raise her from working class to (professional) middle class. She compelled the marriage by a
- c) pregnancy, eventuating as a half-caste daughter who then, to the parents', joined again their respective issues of color and class. (His wife became his "folks".) In her person, they fought again their own early battles. Partly it was couched as demanding the hostile D's respect and obedience. After routs and defiances, there
- d) appeared in Edinburgh a young Norwegian man, at a time when the D felt she had tested the issues in the U.K. and the U.S., and could now cast her identity for herself. So they married, she using her M's out, but without forcing it through marriage, for (?) her class was "good". But they left for relatively classless Norway, to escape the U.K. dilemmas of color and class definitions habitually set by parents. They lived in Oslo with other middle-class.

Thus, c) ^{Daughter} gave up anguish for a measure of ordinary acceptance, just like her F. (i.e. the anguish of unclarity, of jumbled patterns; the acceptance of having excluded mixed patterns.)

The dilemmas so omnipresent to a) and b) that they had to drag RL into them: they pressured their D, "Isn't she colored? Doesn't your instinct tell you?" thus contradicting their denials to their D that she was colored.

3 diff social worlds for F, M, D; span old and new biracialisms.

- 1) Arthur Motley, b. 1906, Ala, pt Indian and some white, left the caste South in 1936 for Edinburgh & medical study so as to break thru the South's social structure. Financial aid from F, an untutored Baptist minister (respectability). In Edinburgh, met some ~~NX~~ students from NY.
- 2) Annette, Sr., b. 1910, Edinburgh, pr family, abandoned by F, supported by M as domestic, & other cil. Schooling? shop assistant. Determined to rise in the relatively free class structure of Scotland, as ambitious Scots k-, & casts a roving eye on students.
Thus they met, grew intimate, married - an achievement for both. She helps support student H. A successful working union, creating successful doctor and W.
- 3) Annette, Jr., b. 1931, Edinburgh, illeg., $\frac{1}{2}$ -caste in an escalator social system doestically, but rigid about overseas colonial relations. She inherits the "foreign" stigma, which her F medical status had ovrcm somewhat for him - but vs. F she is ascribed only a shadowy identity. She is rebellious and unhappy. She strains for a real identity by the US visit to newly discovered GPs, and the N- world; barred thereby from Anglo white, which is her true social one. Has artistic bents that F detests as "cold". She returns to Scotland, outcaste, married a north European "foreigner" to start again, as a free person.

It was a passion with this family to be "somebody", in own terms.

"I hope she doesnt marry an Amer.": this one phrase common to all 3 had special meanings to each. This all came out in NY, with y Annette's confessions of hate & realization to me. Her changed appearnc in NY, tho nt voice.

Fig 3: Notes on the Motley Family. The hand-written date is almost certainly wrong. All other records indicate that this research was done in Scotland in 1951. Ruth Landes Papers, British Race Relations File, National Anthropological Archive Smithsonian Institution.

Race, Society, Culture and Personality.

II Little

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
<u>1. Subject/</u>	<u>Setting/</u>	<u>Goal</u>	<u>/Movement-Decision</u>	<u>/Personality</u>
m.aged Eng./m.cl. male	/ upward? neurosis. 1st W Dane, 1.cl. Afr. mistress/		excused from war / as WMF; hence bcm/ patron of N coloni- als.	compulsive, symbolic acting out. Prof. status.
2. Danish 1st W of youth, met/lk hs in Denmark, 12-/ M yr diff in junior- ity (18 v.30)	/1.m.cl./upward, in/ /U.K. / M /		mrrg, 2 cil. / /	Realistic movements. Pretty, outgoing, healthy. k- emotional uproar.

3. N, f., Jamaica, / divorced, / aet. 38. /	Bamaica, / "colored", / i.e. m.cl. of / BWI. /	/ upward, to white, hence "white" of B WI. Hence divorce, and mrrg without love to Eng. m, with exprssd hostility and punitiveness, /		/ realistic choice. /

Fig 4: Notes on the Littles (1951). Ruth Landes Papers, British Race Relations File, National Anthropological Archive Smithsonian Institution.

2.

Motley

This family carried the world's problems with them; whoever met them had to make a decision. They were unlike families elsewhere whose stories can be told as one bcs all members share the same social lot. But each Motley was a) diff., and b) conditioned the other, from an irrevocably diff viewpoint. How lonely Arthur must have been for a warm brown face all those years. He refused to allow his D to assoc. with unknown Ns and Africans bt himself courted famous Amer Ns and all whites. M never openly admitted H & D were N, though she did by implication, as when describing a fair Amer N woman in the Red Cross who married an Eng. half-caste. D regarded UK not as "home" but as a familiar way-station to her own goal. Her Norwegn H was to change that....a solution offered by her M's experience, & her F's.

Little

KLL's marriages were reverse attack upon his middle-class, under guise of liberalism, driven by private neurosis. The first mrrg to a "foreign" Dane; 2d marriage to Iris, a colonial colored (Jamaican) who entered UK as a nursing student (1st W a domestic, aet 18). He was infatuated at both mrrgs; Iris m. him without love but for ambition, & compelled him in Edinburgh to erase memories of 1st W and cil by selling home, & thus incorporate her fully (& her N cil by 1st N mrrg) to his class, in her own house. (H hd Afr. mistress in Nigeria). k- gloomy, he is subdued only by this 2d W.

During 1st mrrg, KLL sponsored Motleys socially. (uring his 2d mrrg, Motleys less responsive. (M wouldnt be civil to Collins, he sd.) Iris k- kept self separate from H & others. KLL: "Iris writes only to her M." Annettes wrote to none, but talked, even by transatlantic phone, & to N- lovers. Was y Annette attacking society in marrying her Norwegian, in apparent conformity? Or was he attacking, like KLL?

KLL - neurotic drive, remains personally isolated, but socially "eccentric"
Iris - under social pressure attack society thru mixed mrrg, & so climb in U.K.
Motley - " " " "
Annettes - " " " "

m.d-y

Fig 5: Notes on Motley and Little (1951). Ruth Landes Papers, British Race Relations File, National Anthropological Archive Smithsonian Institution.

Seminar
Culture and Personality ; Identity.

1.

(Mexican) Mexican man's (e.g. ILL) fondness for y cil, home-making, & no firm responsibility for economic care of the home, as U.S. understands this. ~~This seems as though like Mex. female identification.~~ When this becomes too strong for comfort, periodically, there is a great aggressive outburst to reach the male position. (Note love of pistol movies, & fighting pictures, as though peeping.) Symbolically, this takes the domestic form of abstaining from all female-home duties, going on to bullying; and this differentiation is male.

Promiscuous pursuit of women combines aggression against female plus the cultural end (and evidence) of machismo. This is similar to bull-fighting.

(Ignacio's) k- swing, unresolved, between active-male & passive-female (wh D hs in converse), familiar to the culture (& human nature) but excessive. The female-aspect is culturally interpreted as repentance. There is a harsh super-ego of female origin (M, Sis e, y).

(Was mrrrg to a Lesbian projection of a mental state? His state, as she left him, ^{was} too brutal). He does not play ~~relaxation~~ but swings from gt activity (business, civil rights, drinking, girls) to passiveness (sleeping, TV, movies, silence at parties). (final, dangers sperm u bond)

Mex. "machismo" conceals excess of hostile dependence on Mother. (Ign. sz Jesus Lopez follows cult of Virgin Mary bt also joing Masons, and finds any one Church unsatisfactory.) With M, Mex. male is k- a small, dependent, rebellious boy. (Ign., angry at RL, cried tearfully, angrily, in self-deception, "Well, at least I hv my M!" Bt k- with M. thr hs bn a cold, hostile, male-filial bond, using Usted, Señora: "in our famiily thr ws no mamacita!") Machismo includes pursuit of female sex, equated with hunt & conquest; then leave & abandon. Boastfully & inaccurately, "I want challenge even in bed", but often little sex with W. What is important is the charging of fear, hostility, anger. (& with women, masochism).

Among men, hostility among male associates, with superficial show of affect in words, arm gestures, tones of voice, kidding, often bitingly (cp. old man after stroke, "U r lk the tits of my GM", i.e. "comfort without sustenance".) Disloyalty expected except to authoritarian caudillo, wh is equated with F, priest, eB. Even among respectable, thr is a sharing of women. In the repudiation of responsible male conduct, by a male of himself as ILL, thr is self-destruction.

(Mex.)
/ Man marries a M- figure (cp. Jewish). Hence strong erotic satisfaction requires other additional women, or an alien woman, i.e. tabu. Man is aggressive, hostile to all women (whn nt passive, masochistic); this incl D; all women r played off vs. ea other. ^{S admirs + rents F.}

Mex. *Amer (or, Latin) tradition stresses social ties above all (vs. Anglo: "To thine own self be true"), 1st, the family, then the local community incl. the Church (or, religious community). No adult lives unmarried, except priests and nuns, & nn ever lived alone. (Cp. then Genovevo Lopez, future Ph.D. in physics, unmarried at 30, lvs alone at UCLA. Cp. also Julian Nava, unmarried PH.D. at 35-37, teaches hist. at S. Fernando City College. And Iris Tan, Ph.D. candidate in Psych at UCLA, divorced aftr a few mos. of marriage, alone at UCLA - all as examples of stress, perhaps intellectual neurosis; vs. the Anglo trend for even intellectual to marry young.).

(two values, D. norms + prestige)

Aberrant persons r chiefly male; tolerated without limits; held accountable only for sexual-temperamental maleness, & honored for the physical accident of maleness. This is largely opposed to Anglo-Amer corresponding interests,

Fig 6: Seminar Notes for Culture and Personality (Mexican Male). Ruth Landes Papers, Box 60, Series 4, Teaching Materials, National Anthropological Archive Smithsonian Institution.

SE Poetry³ 12

scarcely more my own mistress than I was.
 You'd be amused by the colour vocabulary
 now emerging.

No amount of official example is preventing
 the press use of the word 'coloured' to mean
 Negro and Bantu. Negro, however, retains its
 use to describe W African + New World blackskins,
 correctly enough. American usage in fact. The polite
 term, tinged with separateness, ^{+ corresponding} ^(e.g. identification subverted)
 to 'foreigner', is now "dark people". The slang
 terms taken over from the West Indian
 immigrants themselves, I think, (this maybe they
 are Cockney rhyming slang) is Tombs and
 Spades for whites and blacks, which are
 joking - hostile (+ about equivalent to our milder
 use of goys + yids) but somehow mitigated
 by being current in the skiffle + rock and roll
 world.

My Ghana boys sent me their report on their
 stay in Oxford. No prejudice encountered, they
 say (naturally not, their accents ~~stress~~ proclaimed
 them ^{to landladies} as black gentlemen, + the fact they were
 Ghanaians was an asset). They strongly recommended
 repetition of the Oxford experiment to their folk.
 (tell abs Eimhor - Am clergy +)

Fig 7: Undated letter from Sally Chilver to Ruth Landes about 'colour vocabulary' and her Ghana boys.
 Ruth Landes Papers, Correspondence, National Anthropological Archive Smithsonian Institution.

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3. Notes on the Motley Family. The hand-written date is almost certainly wrong. All other records indicate that this research was done in Scotland in 1951. British Race Relations File. Ruth Landes Papers, Correspondence, National Anthropological Archive Smithsonian Institution.
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6. Seminar Notes for Culture and Personality (Mexican Male). Box 60, Series 4 Teaching Materials. Ruth Landes Papers, Correspondence, National Anthropological Archive Smithsonian Institution.
7. Undated letter from Sally Chilver to Ruth Landes about 'colour vocabulary' and her 'Ghana boys'. Ruth Landes Papers, Correspondence, National Anthropological Archive Smithsonian Institution.

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