

## Impossible Burdens: East African Asian Women's Memoirs

Felicity Hand

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

### ABSTRACT

The stereotype of the East African Asian as a willing accomplice in the British imperial project has invariably invoked a male subject and little has been written about the wives and daughters of the *dukawallahs*. Recently the specificities of the East African Asian woman are gradually coming under scholarly scrutiny revealing the inward struggles and social challenges these women faced. This article focuses on the memoirs of three women writers of East African Asian descent, Parita Mukta's *Shards of Memory. Woven Lives in Four Generations* (2002); Neera Kapur-Dromson's *From Jhelum to Tana* (2007) and Yasmin Alibhai-Brown's *The Settler's Cookbook* (2008) as examples not only of thought-provoking studies of female migratory experience but also as reminders that class and ethnicity need constant unravelling in order to reach a clear understanding of the dynamics of colonial structures.