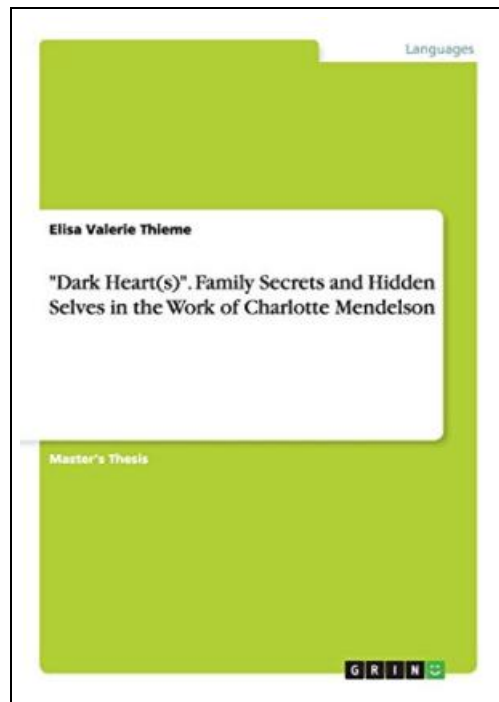


## Dark Heart(s)". Family Secrets and Hidden Selves in the Work of Charlotte Mendelson



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### **Reviews**

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GRIN Publishing Feb 2015, 2015. Taschenbuch. Condition: Neu. Neuware - Master's Thesis from the year 2015 in the subject English - Literature, Works, grade: 1,7, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz (DEL), course: British Studies, language: English, abstract: An analysis of genesis of Mendelson's writing with particular focus on her British-Jewish background. So far, the British-Jewish novelist Charlotte Mendelson has published four books, namely 'Love in Idleness' (2001), 'Daughters of Jerusalem' (2003), 'When We Were Bad' (2007), and 'Almost English' (2013), which could all be typified as intercultural coming-of-age novels. The main source of inspiration appears to be Mendelson's own multi-ethnic background. - She was born in London in 1972 and grew up in St John's College, Oxford, where her father taught public international law. But even though she is English-born and has a Cockney grandfather, Mendelson identifies herself as not in the least English since her paternal grandmother stemmed from "Latvia and Poland" (qtd. in Westbrook) and her maternal grandparents were "Hungarian-speaking-Czech, Ruthenian for about 10 minutes [and also somewhat] Carpathian mountainy" (qtd. in Edemariam) and came to England with 'the last train out of Prague' (Mendelson) fleeing from the Nazis as Jewish refugees (cf. Mendelson). Especially her maternal grandparents are a lasting inspiration for Mendelson. Her "Hungarian side is the side [she] like[s] showing off the most" (qtd. in Westbrook) and is repeatedly referred to in interviews. Her hybrid background 'has enabled [Mendelson] to become an essentially diasporic writer' (Cheyette, *Diaspora and Multiculturalism* 54) When reading Mendelson's novels in chronological order, it seems as if her writing has undergone some development. Recurring topics and tropes, such as living in a supposedly 'cryptic' family microcosm and the difficulties of finding one's identity in circumstances that resemble 'exile', are condensed, deepened, and shaped into more complex versions. Hence, her work seems to...

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