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**Mapping the Post-War Immigration and Hybrid Britishness
in V.S. Naipaul's *The Mimic Men* and Sam Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners***

Dr. Ashutosh Singh*
Sahabuddin Ahamed**

Abstract

The landscape of Britain has been significantly reshaped by the waves of immigration from its former colonies following World War II. This immigration has had profound implications on Britain's geographical, cultural, social, political, and economic dimensions. Immigrants, in their quest for belonging, find their cultural heritage adapted to the new land, yet a sense of nostalgia for the homeland lingers as fragmented memory. From a postcolonial theoretical perspective, the aesthetics of immigration are characterized by cross-cultural, transnational interactions, and the experience of 'double-time.'

The discourse of post-war migrancy challenges the dominant Eurocentric narratives and stereotypical representations of the Third World, presenting a counter-discourse that fosters hybrid and transnational identities. The present paper focuses on the impact of post-war immigration, specifically from Trinidad, on British culture, and explores the potential ambivalent productivity of a multilingual and multiethnic Britain. It delves into the concept of culturally hybridized and ambivalent Britishness, shaped within the 'contact zone' of various ethnocultural encounters, as portrayed in V.S. Naipaul's *The Mimic Men* and Sam Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners*.

Keywords: post-war immigration, Britishness, cultural hybridity, cultural identity, transnational

Introduction

There is the emergence at the centre of the previously peripheral and marginal. For the modern metropolitan figure is the migrant: she and he are the active formulators of metropolitan aesthetics and life styles, reinventing the languages and appropriating the streets of the master. This presence disturbs the previous order. -- Chambers, 23.

... empire gave England power and prestige but left its national character untouched; ... now with postimperial migration, the blacks have come to contaminate the realm. -- Gikandi, 86.

Immigration, as a broad term, encompasses various aspects such as displacement, remembering, assimilation, acculturation, adoption, and self-representation. It has evolved into both a conflicting and interactive phenomenon, as migrant communities in host countries encounter cultural exclusivity, clashes, discrimination, and cross-cultural interactions. The immigrants define and redefine themselves through diverse ethnocultural experiences, even though they share a common cultural consciousness. The Postwar immigration has facilitated global mobility and interconnection, where non-political and de-historicized cultural