



Hacettepe University Graduate School of Social Sciences

Department of English Language and Literature

British Cultural Studies Programme

**THE OTHERS IN THE MOTHERLAND: A POSTCOLONIAL
READING OF THE WINDRUSH GENERATION IN *THE LONELY
LONDONERS AND SMALL ISLAND***

Tahsin ULUTAŞ

Master's Thesis

Ankara, 2025

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KABUL VE ONAY

Tahsin ULUTAŐ tarafından hazırlanan ‘‘The Others in the Motherland: A Postcolonial Reading of the Windrush Generation in *The Lonely Londoners* and *Small Island*’’ baŐlıklı bu alıŐma, 06 Ocak 2025 tarihinde yapılan savunma sınavı sonucunda baŐarılı bulunarak jürimiz tarafından Yüksek Lisans Tezi olarak kabul edilmiŐtir.

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ABSTRACT

ULUTAŞ, Tahsin. *The Others in the Motherland: A Postcolonial Reading of the Windrush Generation in The Lonely Londoners and Small Island*, Master's Thesis, Ankara, 2025.

This thesis explores how Samuel Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners* (1956) and Andrea Levy's *Small Island* (2004) depict the experiences and struggles of the Windrush generation in postwar Britain, focusing on themes of alienation, racism, discrimination, and complexities of cultural identities. The Windrush generation, named after the ship HMT Empire Windrush that transported the first group of migrants in 1948, refers to Caribbean migrants, who arrived in Great Britain after World War II. These migrants, initially invited to help rebuild postwar Britain, faced significant institutional and social challenges that shaped their identities and experiences. The thesis argues that both Selvon - as a first generation migrant - and Levy - as a second generation migrant - use their novels as postcolonial literary works to illuminate the marginalized stories of the Windrush generation, which were often overlooked or misrepresented in mainstream British narratives. With references to history and through the lens of postcolonial theory of key scholars such as Homi Bhabha, Edward Said, and Frantz Fanon, this study highlights how the novels confront colonial stereotypes and explore the complexities of racial and cultural identities of the Windrush generation, situated between two senses: belonging and exclusion. This study provides an in-depth historical overview of the Windrush generation, situating their migration within the context of postwar Britain through the integration of cultural and postcolonial theoretical framework. The study of *The Lonely Londoners* and *Small Island* examines the use of language, form, and content of the novels and the psychological and social impact of the migration on the members of the Windrush generation, and the racism, xenophobia, and discrimination they faced in the institutional and social spheres. Taken together, this thesis synthesizes the similarities and differences between two novels, offering insight into how they serve as crucial texts in the representation of Windrush generation in literature.

Keywords

Windrush generation, multiculturalism, Samuel Selvon, *The Lonely Londoners*, Andrea Levy, *Small Island*

ÖZET

ULUTAŞ, Tahsin. *Anayurtta Ötekiler: The Lonely Londoners ve Small Island'daki Windrush Jenerasyonunun Sömürge Sonrası Okuması*, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Ankara, 2025.

Bu tez, Samuel Selvon'un *The Lonely Londoners* (1956) ve Andrea Levy'nin *Small Island* (2004) eserlerinin, savaş sonrası Britanya'sında Windrush jenerasyonunun yaşadığı deneyimleri ve mücadeleleri nasıl betimlediğini, yabancılaşma, ırkçılık, ayrımcılık ve kültürel kimliklerin karmaşıklığı gibi temaların üzerine odaklanarak incelemektedir. Adını 1948'de ilk göçmen grubunu taşıyan HMT Empire Windrush adlı gemiden alan Windrush jenerasyonu, İkinci Dünya Savaşı sonrasında Büyük Britanya'ya gelen Karayipli göçmenleri ifade eder. Başlangıçta, savaş sonrası Britanya'yı yeniden inşa etmeye yardımcı olmak için davet edilen bu göçmenler, önemli kurumsal ve toplumsal zorluklarla karşılaşmışlar ve bu zorluklar, kimliklerini ve deneyimlerini şekillendirmiştir. Bu tez, hem Selvon'un - birinci kuşak göçmen olarak - hem de Levy'nin - ikinci kuşak göçmen olarak - romanlarını, Windrush jenerasyonunun, ana akım İngiliz anlatılarında genellikle göz ardı edilmiş ya da yanlış temsil edilmiş marjinalleşmiş hikâyelerini gün yüzüne çıkarmak için sömürgecilik sonrası edebi eserler olarak kullandıklarını savunmaktadır. Tarihe atıfta bulunarak ve Homi Bhabha, Edward Said ve Frantz Fanon gibi önemli düşünürlerin sömürgecilik sonrası teorilerini kullanarak, bu çalışma, romanların sömürgeci stereotiplere nasıl meydan okuduğunu ve aidiyet ve dışlanma duyguları arasında sıkışıp kalmış Windrush jenerasyonunun ırksal ve kültürel kimliklerinin karmaşıklıklarını incelemektedir. Bu çalışma, Windrush jenerasyonunun tarihsel bir genel görünümünü sunar ve göçlerini, kültürel ve sömürgecilik sonrası teorilerinden yararlanarak, savaş sonrası Britanya bağlamında konumlandırır. *The Lonely Londoners* ve *Small Island* incelemesi, romanların dil, biçim ve içerik kullanımlarını ve göçün, Windrush jenerasyonu üyeleri üzerindeki psikolojik ve toplumsal etkilerini değerlendirir; ayrıca, bu grubun kurumsal ve toplumsal alanlarda karşılaştıkları ırkçılık, yabancı düşmanlığı ve ayrımcılığı inceler. Bütün olarak ele alındığında, bu tez iki roman arasındaki benzerlik ve farkları sunar ve bu romanların, Windrush jenerasyonunun edebiyattaki temsilinde nasıl önemli metinler olduğunu gösterir.

Anahtar Sözcükler

Windrush Jenerasyonu, çokkültürlülük, Samuel Selvon, *The Lonely Londoners*, Andrea Levy, *Small Island*

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INTRODUCTION

Postcolonial studies focus on a number of various timelines, ethnicities, genders and analyse not only the impact of the colonial practices but also the effects of immigration from the periphery to the centre on the colonized peoples and groups. In the scope of British postcolonial studies, despite often being overlooked, one of the most important groups that lived through challenging conditions first in the peripheral colonies and then the imperial centre is the “Windrush generation.” As Collins states, “[o]f all the immigrants arriving in Britain in the middle of the twentieth century, none attracted as much attention from whites as [the Windrush generation]” (391).

The ship ‘HMT Empire Windrush’ carried 492 West Indians from Kingston, Jamaica to England on June 22, 1948 (Hunter 1). A great many ships followed HMT Empire Windrush with more Caribbean migrants. In the years between 1948 and 1971, “more than 300,000 men, women and children from the Caribbean” (Wallace et. al 2) arrived in Britain. Migrating from countries such as Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, and Barbados, these people and their descendants are now called the Windrush generation, named after the ship that carried them. This event now “occupies a particularly seminal position in the history of late imperial Britain” (Cantres 2) because it is today widely seen as the first step towards a multicultural Britain in modern sense. It was the first direct confrontation between the colonizer and the colonized migrants since most of the colonized people lived in the peripheral colonies and most of the colonizer people in the imperial centre up until that time. As Decouvelaere puts it, “a large scale encounter between colonizers and colonized took place for the first time outside the context of the colony” (2-3).

The arrival of HMT Empire Windrush with the Caribbean migrants coincided with the end of World War II when the country was in distress psychologically, economically and socially. Naturally, the war had exhausted the people of Britain. The country was in ruins, the morale of the people was low, there was “a scarcity of resources” and the country “faced massive economic problems” (Grant 867). In order to rebuild the country that had

been in a dire state since the end of the war, “there was a serious need for labour as the war had depleted a large portion of the British labour force” (Brown 3).

Initially, the British government attempted to tackle this issue by recruiting white people, workers from mainly eastern and southern Europe, namely “Polish soldiers that had fought under British Command [during World War II], a small army of so-called European Volunteer Works (EVWs), and thousands of other European refugees and displaced persons” (Messina 262). Nevertheless, the number of people recruited was still not sufficient for the reconstruction of the country. Therefore, as a last resort, the British government encouraged migration from its colonies after the war in order to fill in the gaps in the job market and solve the issue of labour shortages (Wallace et al. 3). In order to legalize this action, ‘British Nationality Act of 1948’ was passed, which “granted all citizens of the colonies and the Commonwealth unrestricted entry and the right to live and work in Britain” (Vegas 4). This, in turn, attracted thousands of the Caribbean people who were already economically desperate in the peripheral colony. Already othered, suppressed, and faced with even worse economic conditions in the colonies (Cantres 3), the colonized people of the West Indies embarked on ships to England with the hopes of a more comfortable life with better job opportunities. However, the British government’s invitation to the Caribbean people with ‘British Nationality Act of 1948’ was not “an act of benevolence”, but rather “an act borne out of necessity - a result of severe labour shortages” (Wallace et al 3). This attitude was echoed and reflected in the British society as they faced extreme discrimination, racism, xenophobia, and social exclusion on the grounds of their colour and colonial past.

When the Caribbean groups that were to be called the Windrush generation set foot on England, they were not welcome as they thought they would be since “there was an immediate debate on why they should not stay and how incompatible they were within the British society” (Brown 2). Furthermore, as Cantres states, “[t]he hostile environment in London was a shock to the migrants and their collective struggles in the capital upset the salutary perceptions Britain projected as the so called mother country” (1) as they were educated and brought up in the colonies with the glorification of the ‘motherland,’

that is Britain, and “romanticized visions of the metropole” (Collins 394). This is also evident in Windrush generation writer George Lamming’s reminiscence of how the Caribbean migrants felt about Great Britain: “[m]igration was not a word I would have used to describe what I was doing when I sailed with other West Indians to England in 1950. We simply thought we were going to an England that had been painted in our childhood consciousness as a heritage and a place of welcome” (“Sea of Stories”). This demonstrates how the Windrush migrants were educated by the colonial doctrine to see England as part of their identity and history and a place which was going to embrace them upon their arrival. However, they were greeted with hostility, which resulted in their disillusionment.

The public opinion of the Windrush generation and the attitude towards them were so negative by the native Britons that they were treated harshly, discriminated, and othered in a strange foreign land, which they also had trouble adapting to. In such an environment, rejected by the mother country, “the Windrush generation evolved a West Indian identity in Britain. As their diasporic bonds strengthened, they saw themselves as members of a West Indian community, and not solely identified with Britain” (Evelyn, *At Home in the Diaspora* 10). In addition to forming their own identities, West Indians of the Windrush generation were not “silenced subalterns. They boasted their own academics” (Collins 392). With the help of literature, they voiced the problems and challenges the Caribbean migrants faced in public sphere. Some of the most prominent writers belonging to the Windrush generation are George Lamming (1927-2022), V. S. Naipaul (1932-2018), Andrew Salkey (1928-1995), Samuel Selvon (1923-1994), and Andrea Levy (1956-2019), the last two of whom will be studied in this thesis.

George Lamming, who is an acclaimed writer of the Windrush generation, places the discovery of the novel genre as a way of investigating and projecting the inner experiences of the West Indian community as the third most important event in the history of the Caribbean peoples after slavery and emancipation (*The Pleasures of Exile* 37). According to him, the novel provided the West Indians with a medium to explore their collective identity and history shaped by slavery, displacement, and migration under

colonial rule, allowing them to articulate their struggles and experiences and critique the colonial oppression. In this respect, the Windrush generation authors used the novel as a means to vocalize the challenges the Caribbean migrants had in the centre of the colonial power. According to Whittle, “many prominent white writers of Britain’s post-war literary establishment evaded the issue of mass immigration, and the novels produced by Britain’s new arrivals during the fifties and sixties offer an important response to the overt and covert racism they and many others faced” (149). While the issue of the Caribbean migrants’ problems in the imperial centre after World War II was ignored by most white authors of the era, the novels written by Windrush authors “played a crucial role in attempting to represent the social outlines of this era and dilemmas” (Love 1). Conscious of their identities and aware of the problems of racism, discrimination and othering that they had to face in the colonial metropole, “[r]epresenting themselves as threatened, not threatening, sinned against, not sinning, deskilled, not unskilled, respectable West Indian men contradicted white portrayals of them at every point” (Collins 393). In this respect, they sought to redefine and reframe their identity and challenged the colonizer’s narratives that intended to marginalize them.

In the postcolonial critical sphere, literature and history are considered to be collaborative and “where history ends, literature begins with its unique feature of feeding on and being fed by history simultaneously” (Facah 43). In this respect, literature produced by the Windrush writers is particularly significant, given that the texts written by them serve as a projector of the lives of this group. Similar to fellow Caribbean authors of the Windrush generation, authors whose works will be studied in this thesis, Samuel Selvon and Andrea Levy, through their respective novels *The Lonely Londoners* (1956) and *Small Island* (2004), reflect on the collective history of West Indian migrants to write back to the colonizer power and “to correct the misrepresentations of their culture and history which were produced by, and in turn helped to produce, colonial attitudes” (Innes 56). Being members of the Windrush generation and drawing their inspiration from the first-hand accounts of these migrants, both Selvon and Levy present (auto)biographical experiences of the hardships of the Windrush migrants and use their novels as postcolonial platforms to project the challenges the colonized Windrush generation had to face in the imperial centre.

This thesis argues that *The Lonely Londoners* (1956) and *Small Island* (2004), written by Samuel Selvon (1923-1994) and Andrea Levy (1956-2019), respectively portray the experiences of the Windrush generation after their migration to England and highlight themes of alienation, racism, and discrimination. With references to history and drawing on postcolonial theory and the works of prominent critics such as Homi Bhabha, Edward Said, and Frantz Fanon, this thesis demonstrates that Selvon and Levy used their novels as postcolonial literary works to bring to light the challenges faced by Windrush generation, which have been largely overlooked by their white counterparts, and to correct the colonial misrepresentations of these migrants. Even though there have been studies and publications on the work(s) written by Windrush authors, there is not sufficient research that places its focus namely on the Windrush generation, which forms the focal point of this thesis. Furthermore, most academic research has focused on the works of a single Windrush author. This thesis, by selecting *The Lonely Londoners*, which was written by a first generation member, and *Small Island*, which was written by a second generation member, aims to make a direct comparison through the generational points of view and argue that while both novels share similarities, they also display differences in their approaches to telling the stories of the Windrush generation.

The first chapter will present a historical overview of the Windrush generation, incorporating cultural and postcolonial theoretical frameworks to provide a comprehensive understanding. The second and third chapters will examine *The Lonely Londoners* and *Small Island* respectively in terms of language, form, and content and analyse how the novels reflect the discrimination, alienation, and the problematic cultural identities of the Windrush generation. Finally, the conclusion will present the similarities and differences between the two novels in their portrayal of the Windrush generation's stories.

CHAPTER 1

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE WINDRUSH GENERATION

Before going into the details of the lives of the Windrush generation and their struggles such as racial discrimination, societal exclusion, and inherent identity problems after their migration to the imperial centre, it is of utmost importance to study the background – the socio-economic circumstances of post-war Britain – and what led to the mass arrival of the West Indian migrants to England in the historical context to gain a deeper understanding of these people and their sufferings.

World War II changed the world immensely and the term ‘Year Zero’ (Macmillan) is often attributed to the year 1945 when the war ended, signifying the utter destruction and reconstruction. Great Britain, a significant participant of the war, was one of the countries that underwent a remarkable change. The war had naturally exhausted the people of the country. Exposure to the death of the loved ones, bombings, and rationing left people with a big trauma in the post-war era. In addition, “the widespread material damage caused by the war, a scarcity of resources, and the continuation into the postwar period of austerity measures, including the rationing of basic necessities” (Grant 867) put the country that had experienced the destruction and the ravages of the war into a precarious economic state. What is more, “[a]t the end of the Second World War, Great Britain faced massive economic problems, including a substantial balance of payments deficit” (Grant 867). As Robinson and Valeny suggest, “[i]n the immediate aftermath of World War, Britain was a spent force. Heavily burdened with debt, ravaged by wartime destruction, Britain had much to do before it could return to some semblance of normality and attempt again to become competitive” (418). Another important point regarding the internal and external politics of Great Britain made by Cantres is that Britain had lost its position as a global power to the United States and the Soviet Union after the war (17-18), which made Great Britain’s efforts to be the country that it was in the global arena more demanding and

challenging. As it can be seen, Great Britain, after the end of World War II, was in a dire state economically and psychologically.

Emerging as victorious from the war “at the expense of national debt and the balance of payments” (Paul 4), once the glorious British Empire began to shrink and decolonization period started for Great Britain. Not long after the war, Pakistan and India gained their independence in 1947, which meant that Great Britain lost a colony, the size of a big subcontinent that had been under control for centuries (Bonnici, “The Contemporary Post-colonial Novel in English 3”). Myanmar and Sri Lanka followed Pakistan and India in 1948 with their independence (Htet 67). Also, the same year witnessed the end of British Mandate in Israel, a stronghold and a key position in the Middle East (Roberts 216). This all brought about changes domestically and internationally as the country had to rethink and reevaluate its role in the changing global dynamics in a new world order.

Decolonization also had an impact on the psyche of the people as they witnessed the country, which had been a global power, was now shrinking. Great Britain was trying to tend to the wounds caused by World War II, given that people had lost their dear ones, the cities lay in ruins, thousands of houses and factories were destroyed and there was rationing because of the lack of supplies that had been all used to end the war against the axis powers. “[T]he decolonisation of the British Empire signified a shift in Britain’s global position” (Vale), signifying the fact that Britain had lost its prestige and position as a global power. As Ashcroft and Bevir point out: “[d]ecolonization after 1945 therefore threatened both Britain’s international standing and its sense of self” (26). Vale further notes, although Great Britain had won the war, “the arduous process of decolonisation that was soon to follow would serve as a harsh reminder of the reality of the new and disrupted global order.” Devastation of World War II along with withdrawal from the empire due to decolonization inevitably changed the identity of Great Britain not only in the global arena but also domestically. All in all, “Britain was tired. Exhausted by the war effort, still subject to rationing and uncomfortably aware of its debt to the U.S. through the Marshall plan, the British self-image was undergoing a national re-evaluation” (D.

Ellis, "Transatlantic Passages" 73). It can be said that decolonization and the war threw Great Britain's centuries old imperial and colonial hegemony over a wide range of dominions into disarray. This meant that the country had to evolve into 'a new normal' and it had to start right after the war.

Great Britain had to rebuild itself and this led to "the rapid post-World War II expansion of the British economy" (Hewitt 115). However, wartime casualties and the booming of the economy left the British government with labour shortages. Just after the war, there was a serious need for labour as the war had depleted a large portion of the British labour force (Brown 3). So as to fill in the gaps in the job market and solve the issue of labour shortages, the British government encouraged immigration from its colonies after the war (Wallace et al. 3). In order to legalize this action, the British government passed the 'British Nationality Act of 1948.' One of the most important acts passed by the British government in the twentieth century, this granted citizenship to every subject in the British Empire and Commonwealth. Prior to this legislation, there was no legal definition of citizenship in British law, which revolved around the concept of subjecthood, which had been granted automatically to everyone born within the British Empire and Commonwealth (Ashcroft and Bevir 27). The British government, through the British Nationality Act of 1948, intended to redefine shared subjecthood status throughout the Commonwealth and Empire by introducing a novel citizenship in British legislation, and linking all bestowals of British subjecthood "dependent on some form of citizenship, whether in Britain or elsewhere" (Ashcroft and Bevir 27). The main motives behind this act were not out of courtesy to the colonial peoples of the British Empire but to provide the country with the labour force that the colonial peoples possessed. In a way, they were invited to the imperial centre to work and help rebuild the country after the devastation of World War II. Furthermore, according to Ashcroft and Bevir, this act can also be read as a hegemonic exertion for "reasserting Britain's status as 'the mother country'" (27-28) and with the intention of "secur[ing] Britain's place at the head of a robust Commonwealth of Nations" (26) in order to re-establish itself as a neo-colonial global power in the evolving global arena. Designed as a government policy to combat the labour shortages to rebuild the country and reshape country's imperial and colonial identity, the

British Nationality Act of 1948 led to an influx of Caribbean migrants to the imperial centre, Great Britain.

The colonial history and the cultural identity of the Caribbean peoples are of great importance to understand what led to the greatest mass migration in British history and what motives these people had while leaving the countries that they were born in and traveling overseas to England to start out new lives. The history of the Caribbean is complex and shaped by the distinct cultures of the indigenous peoples such as the Arawaks and the Caribs, European - mainly Spanish, French, British and Dutch – colonization, African slavery, emancipation and independence. The Caribbean islands were initially inhabited by the Arawak people who were later invaded by a more aggressive tribe, the Caribs (Taş 116). After the discovery of the Americas by Columbus in the fifteenth century, the European colonizers arrived in the Caribbean islands, established settlements, clashed with the indigenous groups and eventually subdued them. They founded plantations and forced the native Indian populations to work for them. As it was the case with all the colonies throughout the Americas, introduction of diseases to which the native population did not have immunity (Hira 2), forced labour, and violence employed by the European powers all led to the eradication of the native Indians and only a tiny trace of their cultural identities remained on the islands (Taş 117). The Caribbean region and the native peoples of the islands were among the first in the Americas to confront and experience European colonial presence and brutality. As Hassan suggests, the indigenous peoples, namely the American Indians, who lived in the region before Columbus' discovery, proved to be unsuitable for slave labour in the newly formed plantations, and thus, they were completely and violently eradicated, their homes were confiscated and robbed, and their oral traditions were lost as they died out during the Spanish colonization in the sixteenth century (176).

When the sugar demand increased in the continental Europe, the labour force needed to work in the plantations was filled with transatlantic slave trade after the extermination of the native Indian tribes in the Caribbean. As Bonnici reports, the number that crossed the Atlantic exceeded 11.5 million, which made it the largest forced migration in the history

of the world (“The Contemporary Post-colonial Novel in English” 11). In order to supply the demand and supplement the production needs in the plantations, people from Africa and India were enslaved, deracinated from their homeland, and forced to work in the Caribbean plantations. They were brought against their will, many died during the voyage, and when they finally arrived on the Caribbean islands, they were violently treated and were forced to work in the sugar plantations under inhumane conditions. After emancipation, the labour force was substituted by indentured workers from mainly India. While the practice of labour recruitment was changed, the living and working conditions of indentured workers that worked on the plantations “were hardly better than those of the slaves” (Hira 4). A hegemonic master-slave relationship was established between the white European colonizer and the colonial subjects, and the African slaves brought to the islands were violently oppressed both ethnically and culturally. While the colonial subjects suffered tremendously under European rule, “Britain accumulated wealth due to the profit gained from the slave trade and sugar plantations based on slavery without having any doubts about the morality of buying and selling blacks as commodities” (Kato 125). In order to establish economic, social, and political dominance, the colonizing authority sought to eradicate the cultural identity of the local population, imposing its values and systematically shaping their self-perception. The Western colonial rule fostered white supremacy labelling the colonized black people as inferior. West Indians were compelled to see themselves through the lens imposed by the colonizers, as they had no alternative because West Indians had limited means to form and express their own sense of identity other than those of imposed views by colonial rule.

Extermination of indigenous Caribbean peoples and their unique cultures, along with the forced migration of diverse African groups with different languages and identities, resulted in the problematic cultural identity of the black Caribbean population. This was further shaped by the organized enslavement of Africans and the cultural and political hegemony of white European colonizers over the African colonial subjects who were forced to work in the plantations. In this respect, it is of great importance to shed light upon the Caribbean identity with regards to Stuart Hall and his work “Cultural Identity and Diaspora” (1990) which examines the Caribbean identity and its complex nature and formation.

Stuart Hall (1932 – 2014), who was a prominent cultural theorist, was born in Jamaica and migrated to the United Kingdom in the early 1950s, which also makes him a member of the Windrush generation. Hall, in his work “Cultural Identity and Diaspora,” categorizes what ‘cultural identity’ is and presents two views on it. According to Hall, the first and more broadly applied definition of cultural identity is “one, shared culture, a sort of ‘one collective self,’ hiding inside the many other, more superficial or artificially ‘imposed selves,’ which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common” (223). In line with this definition, “our cultural identities reflect the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes which provide us, as ‘one people,’ with stable, unchanging and continuous frames of reference and meaning, beneath the shifting divisions and vicissitudes of our actual history” (223). Hall suggests that this definition of cultural identity is applied to extensive groups of people in the world as most of them share a common culture, language, and history. He also underlines the fact that this definition of cultural identity has been especially significant in the postcolonial struggles which have shaped the world, and it continues to be an incredibly strong instrument in the representation of the previously marginalized peoples (223). It can be said that shared cultural identity has been the main unifying element in the marginalized and oppressed peoples’ struggle against the hegemonic power throughout history.

Hall also presents a second definition of cultural identity which he attributes to the Caribbean peoples. According to Hall, this second concept of cultural identity “recognises that, as well as the many points of similarity, there are also critical points of deep and significant difference which constitute ‘what we really are’; or rather - since history has intervened – what we have become” (225). In this sense, such a notion of cultural identity is not only ‘being,’ but also ‘becoming’ which brings about the duality or hybridity in itself. Hall’s concept of Caribbean identity both ‘being’ and ‘becoming’ aligns well with Homi Bhabha’s notion of hybridity which is “the sign of productivity of colonial power, its shifting forces and fixities” (*The Location of Culture* 112). In this respect, Bhabha suggests that the cultural identity of the Caribbean people is not stable but fluid and in motion because the Caribbean, throughout history, has been on the crossroads of cultural differences and exchanges. Bhabha suggests that hybridity takes place in Third Space, “where the meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity” (*The*

Location of Culture 37). Accordingly, the Caribbean has been a model of ‘Third Space’ because cultural identities have been negotiated through interactions and challenging each other as a result of colonial power dynamics throughout history.

As Caribbean peoples’ authentic and indigenous identities, languages, and cultures were wiped out by the European powers, the islands and the plantations were manned with African slaves with no shared language, background, or history, and the authentic cultural identities of those slaves were eradicated and oppressed by the colonial powers. It can be said that Caribbean peoples’ identity was mainly shaped, indoctrinated, and manipulated by the white European colonial powers. What is more, after the emancipation, the labour force needed to keep the plantations with high profits running was replaced by indentured labourers from the Indian subcontinent with various backgrounds, languages, and religions such as Hinduism and Islam (Premdas 30). In this respect, the Caribbean population lacked a common and shared history, an authentic language and a collective cultural identity and Caribbean islands soon became a melting pot of various peoples from different parts of the world with a cultural heterogeneity. However, when the Caribbean peoples had the chance to form their own collective cultural identities and to establish a cultural homogeneity, they were oppressed by the hegemonic powers and apparatus of the European colonizers because “[t]hey had the power to make [the colonized] see and experience [their selves] as the ‘Other’” (Hall 225), because it was easier and more practical for the Western powers to monitor and exploit the West Indians, which was the main motive behind colonizing the islands and gaining profit from them.

Hall suggests that the Caribbean cultural identity among the colonized peoples of the world is unique in the sense that it is not only in the essence of ‘being’ but still in the process of being formed. Since the Caribbean indigenous identity had been eradicated and replaced with numerous groups of no shared history, culture or language, and the new identities were constructed and imposed on the people on the islands solely by the European colonizer instruments, the Caribbean people had a great deal of trouble in the construction of their identities. What these people only shared was the transportation, slavery, and colonization which formed their short histories that helped the formation of

the cultural identities (Hall 228). As Hall proposes, the Caribbean identity is different from other colonized identities in that it lacked a collective, common, shared language, history and culture but, at the same time, it is the same as other colonized identities in the sense that the West sees any colonized group as very much 'the same' because they belong to the marginal, the underdeveloped, the periphery, the 'Other' and they are at the outer edge, the 'rim,' of the metropolitan world - always 'South' to someone else's El Norte (Hall 228).

According to Hall, the problematic nature of the Caribbean cultural identity lies in the presence of the islands and the phenomenon of 'migration' due to the fact that they lacked a 'motherland' because none of the people occupying the islands actually belonged there, and as it was the case, the Caribbean islands were the places where assimilations, and thus, hybridity were negotiated throughout history (Hall 234). The forms of assimilation and hybridity can be found in the examples of Caribbean religious practices such as "Haitian voodoo, pocomania, Native pentacostalism, Black baptism, Rastafarianism and the black Saints Latin American Catholicism" (Hall 227). The religious practices of which Hall gives examples, and which emerged in the Caribbean are products of hybridity that blend colonial religions such as Christianity with native or African beliefs. According to Homi Bhabha, the interactions between cultures, the colonizer and the colonized, new forms of identities and beliefs are born in "*in-between* spaces through which the meanings of cultural and political authority are negotiated" ("Introduction: Narrating the Nation" 4). In the case of the Caribbean, which is the intersection of multiple and diverse cultural forces, new forms of expressions that were shaped by both colonial and native practices emerged. The hybrid religious beliefs that spawned through the interaction between the colonizer and colonized are the direct results of negotiation and adaptation that reverse "the 'pure' and original authority of identity" (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 112). The mentioned religious practices demonstrate how the cultures are not static but in the process of transforming and becoming. They are also a threat to the colonial power and authority because they subvert the colonial religions which colonial power uses as an apparatus to shape the colonized identity and assert its dominance. In this respect, Hall suggests that hybridized beliefs bring about the problematic nature of the Caribbean identity because it produces 'heterogeneity' among the colonized groups. According to

him, this multiplicity destabilizes the very notion of a unified, singular identity in the construction of the nation. On the other hand, Bhabha argues that as the products of cultural negotiation and hybridization of the colonial beliefs, they are a threat to the 'homogeneity' that colonial authority wishes to establish in the colonies and it becomes a powerful form of resistance, disrupting the colonial project.

Furthermore, as stated earlier, the phenomenon of migration played a major role in the formation of Caribbean cultural identity. As Hall puts it:

[I]t also has to be understood as the place of many, continuous displacements: of the original pre-Columbian inhabitants, the Arawaks, Caribs and Amerindians, permanently displaced from their homelands and decimated; of other peoples displaced in different ways from Africa, Asia and Europe; the displacements of slavery, colonisation and conquest. It stands for the endless ways in which Caribbean people have been destined to 'migrate'; it is the signifier of migration itself- of travelling, voyaging and return as fate, as destiny; of the Antillean as the prototype of the modern or postmodern New World nomad, continually moving between centre and periphery. (234)

In this respect, the Caribbean identity stands out from the rest of the colonized identities of the world in the sense that it is still in the process of being formed and lacks a collective and authentic background. Furthermore, one of the most significant constituents that defines the Caribbean identity is the case of migration and the diaspora culture that comes with it (Hassan 174).

Migration and diaspora continued to define and shape the Caribbean cultural identity in the twentieth century. The West Indian identity is devoid of any sense of 'motherland' because they were stripped off their homeland, and, thus, 'motherland' which has long been forgotten. In other words, any memory of 'homeland,' that is Africa, has been erased from the minds of the Caribbean people systematically by the colonizer West. The Caribbean people have been living in limbo, in a hybridized space where they do not belong to and even if they want to return to Africa in an effort to pursue their distant memories of it, it is not actually there because "[i]t too has been transformed" (Hall 231) by the colonizer West. According to Bhabha, "colonial presence is always ambivalent"

(*The Location of Culture* 107), which means that its exercise always transforms and creates ambivalences as in the case of the Caribbean and Africa. In this respect, the Caribbean people are trapped in liminal Third Spaces where they constantly need to negotiate their cultural identities or histories because they can never fully belong to one origin or another because they have been transformed or are in the process of transformation due to colonial presence. All in all, it can be said that a longing for a motherland where one can feel free and independent at home has shaped the psyche of the Caribbean peoples and, as Hassan puts it, “[t]he absence of home and feeling of homelessness are the hallmark of West Indian identity (174). Furthermore, the state of Caribbean people in need of a ‘home’ is problematic in the sense that they are living on the islands which are not where their identity lies and even if they want to return to those places of their ancestors, they do not really belong there anymore. This feeling has shaped Caribbean people’s pursuit for ‘belonging’ and today, a great portion of Caribbean men are still leaving to live in diaspora overseas, which is also closely linked to the Windrush generation that will be studied in this thesis.

The absence of home and homelessness lead an individual to constantly look for a chance to find a place where they can finally find peace and belonging. It is also true for the Caribbean people, or, more importantly and namely, the Windrush generation. When the labour force was needed to rebuild the country after World War II, the British government passed the British Nationality Act of 1948, actively calling for the peoples in the colonies to settle in England and help with the reconstruction of the country. The West Indian people were the first colonial group to answer this call from the ‘motherland’ en masse because this journey to the imperial centre was perceived as an opportunity for them to become ‘British.’ Those who arrived from the Caribbean islands on ships to Great Britain were later called the Windrush generation, marking the first mass migration in British history and the primary step towards a multicultural Britain in modern sense.

As stated earlier, one of the most important aspects of what defined West Indian cultural identity was migration and a longing for a sense of belonging, which they have lacked throughout their history as a result of Western oppression, diversity of cultures, and

national heterogeneity. Not only the lack of a sense of home and a desire for a sense of belonging, but also the challenging life conditions during and after World War II sparked the urge in the West Indian people to look for a new home. Historically, the Caribbean islands lacked a variety in the fields of production and industry because they had been colonized by the Western powers with only one objective in mind: the maximum production of sugar, which, in turn, made a great deal of profit. Therefore, the economy of most of the islands in the Caribbean relied on a single-crop system of agriculture, “a sugar monoculture” (Gobin 42) which was highly concentrated on sugar that was produced in the plantations with the labour force of African slaves and indentured workers from Asia. When slavery was abolished in 1834, “[w]ithin a period of a few years, the entire economic and social system of [the Caribbean] colonies was turned upside down” (Bielawski) because slave labour was transitioned to wage labour resulting in more expenses for the colonizer and labour shortages. Economically, since sugar plantations were not profitable anymore, the Western powers saw no need of any kinds of economic investments in the islands. As a result of this, the colonized population of the Caribbean islands was in great distress economically.

When World War II started in 1939, the economic and social standards of the Caribbean islands suffered even more heavily. The economic prosperity of the islands relied solely on the mass production of sugar and its exportation. Furthermore, these islands were “obliged to import large amounts of foodstuffs from distant countries” (Chardon 170) because they did not have the means to produce, nor the industry to support it. As a result of the insecurity of marine trade and transportation and “the scarcity of shipping facilities” (Chardon 171) during World War II, exportation of sugar and importation of other goods necessary experienced a sharp and steep decline, which, in turn, worsened the already-bad living conditions in the Caribbean islands. The economic landslide during and after World War II combined with centuries-long colonial oppression and exploitation urged the colonized peoples of the Caribbean islands to search for new horizons with the hopes of a better life and prosperity (Saroukhani). Moreover, as Töngür suggests, “poverty, high unemployment rate, underemployment and low wages were the realities of the colonies and former colonies in 1950s and 1960s” (9). In this respect, when the call for labour from the imperial centre reached the peripheral islands after World War II, many West

Indians saw this as an opportunity to start new lives with new identities in a new world completely alien to their selves.

The period after World War II witnessed the biggest mass migration in the history of Great Britain. Answering the call from British government, many thousands of migrants, mainly from the Caribbean, arrived in Great Britain with great hopes of a bright future. With the passing of the British Nationality Act of 1948 that officially granted citizenship to those that lived in the Commonwealth, the number of West Indian immigrants that arrived in the country between 1948 and 1973 is estimated to be approximately five hundred and fifty thousand (Hewitt 112). The population of the United Kingdom was fifty million prior to the British Nationality Act of 1948 (“UK Population Estimates 1851 to 2014”). The number of Caribbean migrants that arrived in the country corresponded to one per cent of the total population of the United Kingdom, which brought about such immense changes in the societal level in the country that its effect can still be seen in a wide spectrum even today.

Those who embarked on the ships from the Caribbean and arrived in the various ports of Great Britain were motivated to start a new life, with hopes of better living standards that they had been deprived of in the peripheral colonies throughout their history. They thought that the ‘motherland’ needed them once more and they would be embraced by the country when they set foot on Great Britain. Perpetual displacement, slavery, exposure to colonial doctrines throughout their history had placed the West Indian people away from forming their own identities and “[t]he lack of relationship with the past and landscape estranged peoples of the region from their ancestral pasts and cultures, robbing them of mythology, tradition and a sense of origin” (Odhiambo 122). What is more, “[c]olonial subject-citizens had been educated in English traditions and imagined they were coming home to the Motherland” (Vadde 61) because they had been systematically taught, assimilated, manipulated by the colonial apparatus to believe in the fallacy that they belonged to the Empire. Nobrega, who is a first-generation member of the Windrush generation, gives a firsthand account of what motivated a great number of Caribbean migrants to come to England after World War II:

We came because we were coming to the mother country. Years of colonisation had indoctrinated us with a sense of belonging to England, loyalty to the Queen and country, a willingness to fight to defend this mother country and all the values of this mighty seat of empire. learned of it in church and from our school system, our text books. Even our exercise books, which we handled daily in our classrooms, had the face of the beautiful Queen Elizabeth on the cover. (31)

As can be deduced from Nobrega's account, the colonial subjects had been oppressed by the colonial power to embrace the values of the empire by imposing imperial values and norms and, thus, hindering the local population from forming their own cultural identities while they were given a false sense of belonging to the empire because they had been exploited throughout the entire colonial history.

When the Caribbean migrants set foot on England, what struck them first was the landscape, nature, and climate that were completely alien to them. Due to colonial upbringing and education, the imperial centre, England, was conceptualized as the ideal place, the heaven on earth. However, when the Caribbean migrants arrived in England, it was absolutely not what they had imagined, but a complete opposition to how colonial propaganda had portrayed the country. As Nobrega recalls, "[t]he magical fantasy land sold to us through images of the Queen was nowhere to be seen. There was very little sunshine, and there was smog. One went to work and school in the dark and returned home in the dark" (31). The first alienation effect experienced by the Windrush migrants was the climate and weather. Completely different from the tropical climate and weather in the Caribbean islands, the British weather and climate were unwelcoming with the smog and little sunshine. Nobrega continues to compare the landscape in the Caribbean islands and the imperial centre so as to underline the shock the Windrush migrants had when they were trying to adapt to their new lives: "At that time you did not have all these blue shirts and pink shirts, it was always just black and white and grey. In the Caribbean there is colour, there is light, there is space. England was so dark and grey. The houses were all joined together and belched smoke like bakeries and they were cold" (31). The darkness and greyness of the British landscape was a concept entirely alien to the Windrush migrants as opposed to the sunshine and the colourful way of life they had back in the Caribbean islands. The psychological effect of the weather and climate on the

psyche of Caribbean migrants was immense, and the dullness and colourless setting of the imperial centre would foreshadow the challenges when they were trying to get accustomed to their new lives.

In addition to this psychological effect, they were heavily influenced by it physically. The tropical seasons present in the Caribbean islands did not require the West Indians to own or wear warm clothing. Therefore, upon their arrival, they lacked the necessary clothes in order to survive the constant rain and harsh winters of Great Britain. As most migrants did not have money to afford new clothes suitable for the British climate, they faced health problems, and lack of necessary clothing was always a reminder to them that they were in a 'foreign' country (Cantres 76). Another problem the Caribbean migrants faced after their arrival was the lack of physical and personal space. The Caribbean islands were definitely not as urbanized as Great Britain since the economy in the former relied on agriculture while the latter boasted industrialization and urbanization. As Nobrega states, "[b]ut when I came to England and saw that the majority of people were living in a house joined up to another one, I was shocked and confused" (32). This was a concept completely alien to the Caribbean migrants and in contrast to the abundance of space in the Caribbean islands which were not as crowded and populated as Great Britain.

In addition to the psychological and physical challenges faced by the Windrush generation, they were confronted by the local British people with a backlash against them due to their colour and colonial history. Even though there had always been a black population on British soil, the influx of West Indian migrants after World War II led to increased xenophobia (Kapetanacos 138). A major discrimination the Windrush generation had to face after arrival was related to accommodation. Initially, migrants were housed in shelters dating from World War II for a stay of only one week. During their stay, they had to pay two pounds a night. Additionally, the shelter was overcrowded and had limited living space with bunk beds occupying most of the room. These bad conditions brought about health problems. After the one-week period at the shelter, the migrants had to find a job and leave to find a place to live (Hunter 56). However, finding

a job and accommodation was not easy. As D. Ellis reports, “[b]lack people seeking accommodation were regularly met with signs saying ‘No Irish, No Coloureds, No Dogs’” (“The Produce of More than One Country” 216). As can be seen, black migrants, along with the Irish that have been colonized and oppressed for centuries, were discriminated and degraded to the point that they were seen as equal to dogs. According to Nelmark, London’s housing shortage after the devastation of World War II was even used as a means to control the newly arrived black population and to promote xenophobia and racism towards West Indian migrants. It was claimed that the shortage of houses was essentially a product of West Indian migration, which, in turn, led to prejudices and discrimination of the Caribbean migrants in the public and social sphere (11). As a result, West Indian migrants had great trouble finding accommodation and, when they succeeded, it was usually not the ideal place to live in and was overpriced. Eventually, in order to provide themselves with accommodation, many migrants needed to share the rent and live in cramped spaces, as opposed to their lives in the Caribbean with lots of room and personal space.

In addition to the housing problems of the Windrush generation, another major challenge that they faced was the search for jobs. Despite the fact that they had been invited to the ‘motherland’ to fill in the labour shortage, they were blocked from finding jobs due to discrimination and racism. As Hunter reports, many West Indian migrants faced racial prejudice when seeking job opportunities since they were singled out upon application with the notions that they would be slow in their movements at work (74). This perception results from Orientalism, put forward by Edward Said who argues that the West constructs binary oppositions between itself and the Orient through stereotypes as a way of presenting itself superior and justifying the unequal power dynamics that it imposes. Also, according to Homi Bhabha, “[t]he objective of colonial discourse is to construe the colonized as a population of degenerate types on the basis of racial origin, in order to justify conquest and to establish systems of administration and instruction” (*The Location of Culture* 70). Said proposes that the colonial subjects are among those influenced by Orientalism which, according to him, “has been an aspect of both imperialism and colonialism” (123). In this respect, stereotypical image of the migrants as ‘slow’ is a direct outcome of Orientalism which classifies them as “‘devoid of energy and initiative’” (Said

38), and thus, less lazy and efficient compared to their white counterparts. Therefore, it can be said that these stereotypes, created by the colonizer, serve to legitimize the institutional discrimination. Furthermore, according to D. Ellis, “[b]lack people seeking work would meet equally explicit bars upon entry, or would suffer discrimination in the nature of work they were given, their union membership and their vulnerability to redundancy” (“The Produce of More than One Country” 216). As can be seen, Caribbean migrants of the Windrush generation were restrained from employment by the local Britons. Although most of the migrants were skilled workers, as a result of rejection from most of the employers, they had to work in menial jobs which paid less and required more labour. Finding a job would not ease their struggle in the social sphere, though as they faced racism due to their skin colour and were also abused and discriminated at the workplace by their employers and coworkers (Hunter 74).

In addition to the accommodation and employment problems, the Windrush generation was constantly discriminated and racially abused on a societal level in every public sphere. According to D. Ellis’ reports, even church leaders exhibited mixed feelings regarding the inclusion of black individuals within their congregation (“The Produce of More than One Country” 216). This shows the extreme xenophobia towards the Windrush generation even in the religious institutions in which all individuals, regardless of their colour, race, and status, are welcome. In this respect, they were shocked by the harsh reality that they were not welcome in the ‘motherland.’ As Vegas states, “England’s almost entirely white population did not greet immigrants as siblings, but aliens who posed a threat toward the integrity of the nation” (5).

The backlash of the white Britons against the Windrush generation grew gradually, but substantially. In time, verbal abuses towards the West Indian migrants transformed into physical attacks and the influx of non-white migrants was referred to as Britain’s ‘colour problem.’ Despite legal provisions for equality that included Commonwealth nations, a significant portion of the British society opposed the presence of non-white migrants. This resistance escalated notably during the 1958 ‘race riots’ in Nottingham and Notting

Hill where white majority gangs attacked the houses of Windrush residents, shouting the words “kill all black bastards” and damaged them in an organized crime, resulting in the arrest of seventy-two white people (Travis). Anti-immigration efforts often employed colonialist language and racial hierarchies to reinforce the idea of white British superiority, and the white population of Britain maintained a centre-periphery dynamic within the country’s borders, othering black migrants from the colonies (Whittle 150). As a result of discrimination and racism towards the West Indian population and growing social tensions between the white majority and black minority in Great Britain, Macmillan government passed the Commonwealth Immigrations Act in 1962 to tackle this major issue. This act prohibited further immigration from the Commonwealth, changed the qualifications required of Commonwealth citizens applying for citizenship under the British Nationality Act of 1948 and deported those convicted of offences and those recommended by the court for deportation (*Commonwealth Immigrants Act 1962*). Instead of de-escalating the social tensions, the government chose to appease the white population by imposing strict immigration controls, which can be seen as a reflection of racism on a state level and actually acknowledging it. This meant that once again the West Indians were dismayed and “[t]he state’s coercive power, which was omnipresent in the Caribbean and a major part of life for all West Indians, was exacerbated in the metropole because of racialization in the social life in the capital” (Cantres 21). All in all, the Windrush generation was doubly abused, discriminated, and oppressed, both in their homeland and in the false ‘motherland’ they migrated to.

Faced with all these challenges in Great Britain, West Indians of the Windrush generation had very few instruments to reflect what they had experienced in the country, and literature was a means to convey their experiences in a powerful way. The mass migration of the Windrush Generation had a strong impact on the white majority society of Great Britain. Nevertheless, the challenges faced by the migrant West Indians just after World War II were neglected in the literary sphere by white writers of the country. Instead, they focused on the class struggles of the era. In this respect, what is important with Windrush literature is that it opens up a new perspective for the English readers, to see post-war Britain through the lens of the Windrush generation, which actually defamiliarizes post-war British culture and society (Whittle 146). Newly-emerging writers of the Windrush

generation such as George Lamming and Samuel Selvon took up the task of informing the world about the struggles of West Indian people. Through literature, West Indian authors voiced the problems the Windrush generation faced in the public sphere after their migration. As D. Ellis notes, the works written by the Windrush authors were mainly written in the imperial centre both “for, and in reaction to, a British audience” (“The Produce of More than One Country” 220). This means that these writers took up the task of explaining and articulating the Caribbean experience to a wider British public while also challenging and critiquing the British colonial values and attitudes.

Experiencing identity crisis, a sense of alienation, discrimination and hostility, Windrush authors such as Samuel Selvon, George Lamming, and Andrea Levy reflected these themes in their works and a new form of British fiction was born “centred on the experience of exclusion, conflicts over the meaning of national traditions and reflecting upon the significance of collective identity in a multiracial international society” (Vadde 61). Reflecting on their first-hand experiences when and after they arrived in England, the Windrush authors focused on the process of migration and living in a hostile environment. Accordingly, as Whittle suggests, “[they] wrote significant literary accounts of their sense of dislocation and estrangement when confronted with racial prejudice in a nation that they had been encouraged, through the history of colonialism, to view as their ‘motherland’” (151). Troubled with the complexity of their cultural identities, the Windrush authors often portrayed characters that displayed hybridity and demonstrated how this hybridity shaped West Indian people’s selves and how it distressed them. Many works of the Windrush generation also highlight the imperial and colonial oppression that Caribbean people continued to suffer even after their arrival through institutionalized discrimination, social marginalization, and racism. It is evident in many works of the Windrush generation that Caribbean vernacular is heavily used by the Windrush migrants. In this respect, Windrush authors used the hybridized language, a linguistic mirror of their cultural identity, as a vengeance to take hold of their means of self-representation and transform English literature (Ashcroft 81). Utilization of the colonizer’s ‘hybridized’ language is then a form of mimicry, which Bhabha defines as “almost the same, but not quite” (*The Location of Culture* 86). According to Bhabha, “mimicry is constructed around an ambivalence” and in order for it to be successful, it “must continually produce

its slippage, its excess, its difference (*The Location of Culture* 86). Therefore, mimicry produced or created is never a perfect imitation and the imperfection of the distorted language used by the Windrush authors “poses an immanent threat to both ‘normalized knowledges and disciplinary powers’” (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 86), and “disrupts [colonial discourse’s] authority” (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 88). Through hybridized language, these authors engaged in a process similar to Bhabha’s mimicry. They adopted the colonizer’s language but utilized it as a signifier of their cultural identities and twisted it for their own design which was to disrupt the colonial authority in the “secret art of revenge,” (*The Location of Culture* 56) which is mimicry according to Bhabha.

All in all, it can be said that Windrush authors used literature, primarily the form of novel (Welsh, “Critical Myopia” 135) as platforms to represent the negative experiences of the Windrush generation and provide visibility to their marginalization and discrimination, which led to their social alienation and manifested itself in social spheres such as accommodation and employment. Writing back to the imperial centre from the imperial centre itself, these novels address the issues of racism and social inequality based on the colour and the race of the migrants. It is also possible to read these works of literature as personal manifestation and historical narration that enlighten the era which was mainly overlooked by the white intelligentsia as the authors were inspired by the firsthand accounts of themselves or of fellow Caribbean migrants in the ghettoized societies that they were part of.

CHAPTER 2

FRAGMENTED DREAMS, DISPLACED SELVES: WINDRUSH NARRATIVES IN *THE LONELY LONDONERS*

Samuel Selvon was born in Trinidad and migrated to England in 1950, making him a member of the Windrush generation. Selvon produced many literary works such as *A Brighter Sun* (1952), *An Island is a World* (1955) and *Turn Again Tiger* (1958) which remain essential in the study of Caribbean literature as they deal mostly with what it means to be Caribbean in colonial and postcolonial context. As a central focus, he also explored and narrated the lives of the Windrush generation in his novels such as *The Lonely Londoners* (1956), *The Housing Lark* (1965), and *Moses Ascending* (1975). Today, Samuel Selvon is regarded as one of the most influential Windrush authors as he is thought to have “lighted the way for other important West Indian writers” (Chukwu 3). The novel that brought him to prominence, *The Lonely Londoners*, sheds light on the experiences of the Windrush migrants in London which feature racism, discrimination, and alienation. Told in loosely connected episodes, the novel centres on Moses, a seasoned migrant, and a group of fellow West Indians such as Galahad, Bart, Harris, and Cap as they navigate the challenges of adjusting to life in an unwelcoming city. The novel concludes on a note of ambiguity, reflecting the ongoing struggles of the Windrush generation.

The Lonely Londoners, which “marks a milestone in the decolonization of the British novelistic tradition” (Eckstein 1), is one of the first novels to shed light upon the lives of the migrants that belonged to the Windrush generation after World War II. It “stands as a literary landmark in the creation of what a number of critics have begun to call Postcolonial London” (Birat 824) which explores the themes of migration and identity from a postcolonial point of view. “Writing against contemporary English notions about West Indians” (Vegas 6), Selvon, in *The Lonely Londoners*, retells the stories of the colonized people in the imperial centre. The novel features “acclaimed innovations in the

literary use of the language” (Ramchand 45) which is Creolised English both in narrative and dialogue as the ‘nation language’ of the West Indies, which can be read as a testament to self-recognition of the colonized persona. The success of the novel lies in the fact that it is based on first-hand accounts of the lives of this group that migrated to Great Britain after World War II, and the author’s close observations and experiences as Selvon himself was part of this generation.

Samuel Selvon’s success in authorship is deeply rooted in his identity as he is a pioneer and a significant representative of Caribbean literature. He was born in Trinidad in 1923 to a family from India, and his ancestry also included British heritage through his paternal grandmother who was Anglo-Scottish (Nebeife and Kanu 172). Inheriting a mixed ancestry, his cultural and national identity draws parallels to the majority of the Caribbean peoples whose cultural and national identities have been also problematic by nature as the West Indies has been home to extermination of indigenous peoples, forced slavery, migration, and diaspora throughout history and thus, a melting point of various cultural backgrounds and ethnicities which resulted in hybridity in the formation of identities.

Like most of his people, during World War II, he worked in the British army, and it was then that he took up writing. After the war ended, he started working as a journalist for a local newspaper and editor of a literature magazine. He continued to write in his early adult years and some of his literary work was even broadcast by the BBC Overseas Programme *Caribbean Voices* which “became formative for a whole generation of young Caribbean writers including George Lamming, Kamau Brathwaite, Derek Walcott, Andrew Salkey, V. S. Naipaul and many others” (Eckstein 13). It was in 1950 that he left his island for England, ‘the mother country’ which was calling for labour from his colonies in order to rebuild the country after the devastation of the war (Nasta 1). This period after World War II marked the breaking point towards a multicultural Britain in history with the arrival of the Windrush generation. In this respect, his literary source of inspiration and focus was on this group of migrants (Belaid and Reguig-Mouro 220) as he reflected their lives in his novels such as *The Lonely Londoners* and *Moses Ascending*. The aim of this chapter is to analyse *The Lonely Londoners* with references to Selvon’s

innovative language use and common themes that were shared by most of the Windrush migrants such as displacement, alienation, discrimination and inherent identity problems such as mimicry and hybridity as a result of colonialism.

Even though Selvon worked professionally as a prominent writer in the Caribbean, he started working in menial and mostly part-time jobs after he arrived in England (Nasta 2). This demonstrates how he, as a West Indian man, was perceived by the white British when he had to work. He was barred from performing his own profession, writing at which he was competent. Instead, he was assigned a role in menial jobs which he, as a migrant, was thought to be worthy of by the colonial ideology. It was at this point when he faced the first course of discrimination and had to change and adapt his identity in order to survive in white-centred England, altering and shaping his attitude towards an anti-colonialist view, which is vividly observed in his work. Being a member of this generation and living among his fellow West Indian migrants allowed him to be conscious and observant of the struggles this group had to endure while trying to adapt to life in England. He himself recalls his time when he started staying at the Balmoral Hotel run by the British Council as a hostel for overseas students and migrants from the Caribbean as follows: “It was my first experience of living among other West Indian islanders, happening in the heart of London thousands of miles from our home territory, and I learned as much about them as I learned about the English whose ignorance of black people shocked me” (Selvon, “Finding West Indian Identity” 36). Migration to Great Britain then turned out to be the opportunity for him to evaluate better and examine what ‘being Caribbean’ actually meant for him and what it meant for the white British, paving the way for his self-enlightenment and self-realization and helping him establish “Caribbean consciousness in the British context” (Pichler 47). In England, where he was seen not as British but an outsider and deemed as inconsequential because he was a West Indian migrant, his migration gave him the opportunity to bond with his fellow Caribbean people who shared mutual heritage and experiences. Confronted by the harsh realities of racism and discrimination, he fostered a belonging for his Caribbean roots. At this point, he embraced his cultural identity as West Indian, and he understood that he was seen as an inferior man because he was not white and he belonged to the colonies.

Accordingly, on a wider spectrum, “Selvon, who is a South Asian Trinidadian, does not differentiate in his fiction among Caribbeans based on their ancestry, and most of his lovingly drawn characters are of African descent” (Dyer 114). In this respect, he not only embraces his ‘Caribbean’ roots, which is usually associated with being black, but also centres his fiction on this identity as “[m]any Indian-Caribbean migrants who experienced life in Britain during the 1950s and early 1960s were labelled ‘Black’ by white Britons” (Kaladeen 83), because in the eyes of the colonizer, all migrants and colonized peoples were put into the same category, not ‘white’ and, thus, were degraded and categorized into the ‘black’ identity. This oversimplification results from the colonial perception and hegemony which is established through a racial hierarchy that prioritizes whiteness as the standard superiority. Anyone, as in the example of the West Indian migrants, who did not comply with this standard was deemed inferior, non-white, and, thus, black. A result of colonial dynamics, “alignment of colonial subjects [to the categories of] Black/White [and] Self/Other” (Bhabha, Foreword ix) and the colonial creation of “a division which cuts across the fragile skin – black and white” (Bhabha, Foreword xv) created this inferior/superior relationship between the colonized and colonizer based on their respective skin colours. Aime Césaire also touches on the blackness of the colonized and puts forward the distinction and division between the white and the black constructed by the colonial authority: “Europeans despised everything about Africa, and in France people spoke of a civilized world and a barbarian world. The barbarian world was Africa, and the civilized world was Europe” (Césaire 88). In his struggle against the colonial authority, Césaire adopted ‘negritude’, a term that he describes as follows:

[A] concrete rather than an abstract coming to consciousness. What I have been telling you about - the atmosphere in which we lived, an atmosphere of assimilation in which Negro people were ashamed of themselves - has great importance. We lived in an atmosphere of rejection, and we developed an inferiority complex. I have always thought that the black man was searching for his identity. And it has seemed to me that if what we want is to establish this identity, then we must have a concrete consciousness of what we are - that is, of the first fact of our lives: that we are black; that we were black and have a history, a history that contains certain cultural elements of great value; ... we affirmed that we were Negroes and that we were proud of it, and that we thought that Africa was not some sort of blank page in the history of humanity; in sum, we asserted that our Negro heritage was worthy of respect. (91-92)

In this respect, as a defence against the colonial authority, Césaire deconstructs the colonial notion of white superiority, embraces his blackness arguing that ‘blackness’ is not something to be ashamed of. Therefore, he seeks to affirm black people’s humanity in colonial environment that has systematically dehumanized them. Similarly, the migrants of the Windrush generation, including Selvon, centred their identity on ‘blackness’ as a means of collective solidarity among themselves to counter and stand against the discriminative colonial racial hierarchy which did not allow them into the identity of British because they lacked ‘whiteness.’

What struck Selvon most after his arrival in England was the demeaning ignorance of the white British for the part of the world where he came from and constant exposure to questions such as ‘if people lived in the trees, if there are many lions, tigers and elephants, and how well he spoke good English’ (Selvon, “Finding West Indian Identity” 36). These questions directed at him vividly demonstrate the fact that the white colonizer had this Orientalist view of the colonized people with a degrading emphasis to the point that they thought they lived in the Caribbean jungles among the wild animals, which are actually native to Asia and Africa, up in the trees just like wild animals. Said suggests that the Orient, in this case, the colonies, was constructed by the West as a place of “exotic beings” (1) as opposed to the rational beings of the West in order for the colonizer authority to establish a superiority over the colonized people and, thus, reinforce power and control. This also suggests that the colonized had as much value as the animals, attributing an exotic way of life to them and dehumanizing them. This anecdote shared by Selvon also emphasizes how the white colonizer did not see the Caribbean people as members of their country although they legally were. The white British were amazed at, and in a way, sarcastic and degrading in their opinions and perceptions of the migrants including Selvon. In contrast to their colonial and imperial conceptions of the black people, he actually spoke good English and actually excelled at writing as an author, whose critically acclaimed novels such as *The Lonely Londoners* proved the white colonial supremacist viewpoint wrong and shattered it.

The other disappointment experienced by Selvon after his arrival was how it was not the “fountain of knowledge” (Selvon, “Finding West Indian Identity” 36) he had thought back in his homeland Trinidad and how it contradicted his perception of Great Britain. His high expectations of the imperial centre stemmed from colonial education, which was used as an apparatus to oppress and control the colonized people throughout all the British colonies and how they were taught to see the imperial centre as an idealized place to live, ‘the heaven on earth’ and the core place for knowledge and wisdom. In relation to how the colonizer shapes the colonized people’s perception of the world, Fanon asserts that

there is a constellation of postulates, a series of propositions that slowly and subtly – with the help of books, newspapers, schools and their texts advertisements, films, radio – work their way into one’s mind and shape one’s view of the world of the group to which one belongs. In the Antilles, that view of the world is white because no black voice exists. (152-53)

Fanon argues that colonial authority, through numerous media that work into the minds of the colonized, creates a lens through which they see the world and, consequently, it causes the colonized to value ‘whiteness’ and the ‘imperial centre’ superior, and as a result of the constructed binaries, see themselves inferior. In this respect, as Karaduman suggests, “the colonized societies which are labelled as uncivilized, uneducated and inferior are forced to internalise these adjectives” (27) Moreover, as Spivak suggests “the subaltern cannot speak” (104) because they are excluded from the dominant discourses, which are based on colonial doctrines, and denied access to the means of articulation and representation. Therefore, the colonized people are not allowed to speak and form their own perceptions as a result of systematic oppression under colonial power. However, when he was exposed to the questions full of absurdity and ignorance that displayed a complete Orientalist stance, he very well understood that England was not the place he had thought it was, and he found that most of the information he had about England “was just mere speculation” (Dizayi 186). This led to his disillusionment, a common feeling which was shared by most migrants after their arrival.

In the centre of his works lies the identity crisis that was displayed by the West Indian people. As a group of people that had already been dissociated throughout the course of history as a result of colonial practice, they possessed a feeling of displacement and, thus,

lacked a sense of belonging, which is the core and constituent part of developing a cultural identity. As the Windrush generation left their islands to start new lives on British land, they actually pursued their desire and longing for belonging in the country where they could be seen as 'British.' Although "they were officially British subjects" (Murdoch 577), they "did not only face hostilities from the Britons but also faced rejection" (Ali 84) in England where xenophobia, racism and discrimination against them prevailed. As a result, migration to England generated more issues with regards to their cultural identity rather than presenting a solution because their already troubled cultural identities were exacerbated when they faced British hostility instead of being welcome. According to Selvon, this problem with the Caribbean people's cultural and national identity is also reflected in his own personality:

It's all well and good to appreciate what the world is like and what people are like, but who the hell am I? And where do I fit into, have I got roots, am I Indian? Am I a Negro? ... What is Trinidadian? ... After all, the island hasn't got a great deal of history or civilization behind it ... So I remain, in a way, somewhat displaced. (qtd. in Nasta 4)

He deeply questions his identity and struggles to give a clear explanation to who he actually is. It indicates his internal existentialist conflict of not fully belonging to one culture or another due to the lack of a collective history of his island as a result of colonial rule and, therefore, he feels displaced in a world ruled by identities. This problematic cultural and national identity is possessed by a majority of the West Indians, and it is even more evident among the members of the Windrush generation who are thought to have lived through the same process of identity deterioration twice, both in their homeland and in England after their migration under colonial rule. Therefore, inspired by his lived experiences, Selvon locates this motif of displacement and problematic cultural identity in the centre of most of his literary works, and also *The Lonely Londoners*.

One of the most prominent feelings experienced by this group of migrants on the British land was 'alienation' and it resulted not only from the physical effects of the contrast of their homeland and England in terms of space and weather but also it is deeply rooted in the colonial relationship. As Ali points out, "[t]he migrants experienced Britain in very contrasting terms, comprising of the Britain that colonized them and treated them as

subjects back in their motherland, and the Britain that rejected and treated them as aliens and foreigners once they landed on its soil” (84). As a result, this duality of being subjects in the periphery and the unwelcome outsiders in the imperial centre generated a deep sense of alienation and feeling of displacement for the West Indian migrants.

The setback in the migrants’ adaptation and integration to their new lives in the ‘motherland’ was not limited to the issues brought about by senses of alienation and displacement. The arrival of newcomers was received with a drastically negative response from the British and on a societal level, they were othered and excluded in daily and professional life by the white Britons, most of whom displayed open xenophobia and discrimination against the black migrants from the West Indies (Kalpaklı 246-47). Moreover, the process of migration and then settling in England was “a disillusioning immersion in the everyday concerns of finding adequate housing, keeping menial jobs, enduring cold weather, and staying in touch with widely scattered friends and family” (Dyer 109). As a result, the migrants who felt alienated in a hostile land were forced to form ghettos, where they could feel equal, welcome, and have a sense of belonging and that featured fraternity in an alien space, which fostered migrants’ bonds and helped them towards self-realization, eventually finding where their identity lay. It is also significant to point out that this group of people was compelled to form these ghettos and was forced to be locked in those places by the white Britons who excluded them in every sphere of the public. They did not wish to form their own communities in the new country that they migrated to but integrate into the society in which they could feel welcome. However, every attempt of the Windrush generation towards integration into British society was made impossible by the white population of Great Britain (Karagöz 416).

Similarly, and accordingly, *The Lonely Londoners* tells the story of Caribbean migrants who have formed ghettos in the city of London to survive their adaptation to their new lives and take shelter from the racial discrimination and othering that they are exposed to after their migration. Selvon’s success with the novel stems from his authentic portrayal of the Windrush generation, deriving from the experiences of his own and his fellow migrants that he lived with in his first years in London. In the novel, narrating the troubled

lives of his characters who are stuck in tiny apartments or ghettos and are culturally excluded from the outside world in London, the author uses his setting and characters to record and project the lives of this group in a wider scope. He sets the tone of his novel from an anti-colonial point of view and uses a great many techniques to draw attention to the difficulties faced by West Indian people, one of which is the form and the structure of the novel.

Selvon does not use a traditional linear plotline to tell the stories of the Windrush generation, but “a non-linear series of loosely connected episodes” (Mozes 13) of different characters that share the common challenges of living in London as migrants. His choice is based on the characteristically West Indian cultural forms of the ‘ballad’ (oral storytelling) with uses of deliberate generic openers ‘one time’ or ‘the time’ regularly throughout the novel, evoking the conventions of oral literary tradition (Welsh, “This is London” 91). By employing a narration and form similar to the West Indian oral tradition and marking his novel as “West Indian in form” (Kalliney 96), Selvon preserves Caribbean cultural heritage, reflecting it in his novel as a means to resist the cultural erasure and as a tool to subvert the conventional literary forms that are associated with and manifest colonial authority.

Another important postcolonial strategy applied in the novel lies in the use of language which is one of the most essential constituents of what determines cultural identity. It is through language that collective history is expressed and mirrored, and through it, it is made possible to perceive and define oneself. In this respect, colonizers “paid attention to the language as a tool of domination and as a means of constructing identity” (Loomba 41). Furthermore, in the imperial and colonial context, it “becomes the medium through which a hierarchical structure of power is perpetuated, and the medium through which concepts of ‘truth,’ ‘order,’ and ‘reality’ become established” (Ashcroft et al. 7). Therefore, language plays an important role in the white colonizers’ design to suppress and subdue large numbers of people in many parts of the world where they conquered and set up colonies in pursuit of the exploitation of the indigenous people and local resources. Use of indigenous languages was harshly banned and eventually hundreds of

indigenous languages, together with the oral and linguistic heritage that they possessed, died out as a result of the politics of colonialism (Sayedayn 134). Historically, standard English was heavily imposed by the British colonizers through education as a way of oppression and a means to subdue the colonized peoples in order to homogenize and control a large population.

In the context of the West Indies, the imposition of the English language on the colonized people proved to be even more significant for the colonizer when compared to the other colonies in various continents in the world as it featured a more heterogeneous population due to the unique history of the islands that witnessed the extermination of indigenous tribes, African slavery, and indentured labour from the Asian subcontinent. Homogenization of the population on the basis of language of the colonizer was the primary motivation of the British Empire to subdue the Caribbean peoples with greater ease. Therefore, the language of the colonizer was promoted, imposed, and used heavily for this mere purpose to the extent that “school was English, and English was school” (qtd. in London 287). Colonial education system in the West Indies counted drastically on the English language so that it could be used as a tool towards the assimilation of the diverse cultural identities, and, thus, the primary objective of homogenizing the population and better control could be achieved. Eventually, with the efforts of the colonial power, English became the main language to be used on the islands, suppressing and eradicating the various local and indigenous languages which made up a significant amount of what constituted the cultural identities of the colonized people.

Similarly, and ironically, just as the colonizer has used language to control and suppress the indigenous and colonized population throughout history, which is also the key case in the subjugation of the West Indies, language has also played a key role in writing back to the colonizer as a form of insurrection in postcolonial studies and works as “post-colonial writing defines itself by seizing the language of the centre and re-placing it in a discourse fully adapted to the colonized place” (Ashcroft et al. 37). In this respect, language was also used as a tool by the colonized peoples in the process of decolonization. Ashcroft et al. propose two approaches the colonized authors apply in their writing: the first one is

abrogation, which is the complete refusal of English as a means to oppose the imperial centre by focusing on and highlighting the native language of the colonized; and the second is the appropriation and reconstruction of the language of the colonizer as a means to distort what is valued highly by the white British as a form of vengeance (37-38). The former approach asserts that the language of the colonizer power that was imposed on the colonized people must not be used in literary works written by the postcolonial authors. Instead, the local and indigenous languages, along with the native forms of literature, such as the oral tradition, should be promoted in order to obtain cultural identity and break the chains of the colonial past.

In the context of the West Indian authors, while writing back to the colonizer, it was nearly impossible to completely refuse the English language as it was heavily imposed by the colonial power throughout colonial rule, and all the indigenous languages and the languages that African slaves and Indian indentured labourers brought along died out as a result of colonial oppression. For instance, the African slaves were especially “separated on their arrival in the New World from their language groups by their white masters in order to reduce collusion and possible revolts” (Sindoni 221). However, the vast heterogeneity of the islands resulting from centuries of African slavery and indentured labour brought about a significant mixture of cultural identities. The creolized dialect of the Windrush generation resulted from the colonizers’ harsh and oppressive treatment of West Indians and eradication of any native language on the islands. Moreover, “[t]he Caribbean region constitutes perhaps one of the world’s most extensive and most varied site of creolization as a result of the very different histories of enslavement and colonization that unfolded on each of the Caribbean islands” (Bertacco 5). In this respect, indigenous population of the islands, the various groups of African slaves and indentured labourers from Asian subcontinent, mainly India, brought together their distinctive cultures and languages, paving the way for a creolization of culture and language not seen as extensively in any part of the world. As a result, Caribbean English Creole was born with drastic influences of West African, Bantu grammar and European vocabulary and in the West Indies, it functioned as an essential part of ‘low culture’ and was used in private life and solidarity social relationships whereas the standard English served the purposes of ‘high culture,’ having been used in official contexts such as writing, education, and

administration (Sindoni 223-24). In this respect, the Caribbean Creole stood for and signified the colonized and oppressed population whereas the standard English represented the colonizer and the oppressor.

Since standard English was associated with colonial power and almost all native and local languages used in the Caribbean died out as a result of colonial oppression, Selvon in *The Lonely Londoners* opts to use the second method proposed by Ashcroft et al. so as to write back to the colonizer. For this purpose, he appropriates and reconstructs the English language by using a Caribbean vernacular which is naturally distorted in form, pronunciation, syntax, and vocabulary. He was one of the first West Indian authors to utilize an original Caribbean speech in a novel, both in dialogue and narration as Jiajia. He asserts, “*The Lonely Londoners* is groundbreaking in its use of creolized English, or ‘nation language,’ for narrative as well as dialogue” (361). Using the Caribbean vernacular was also utilized by Selvon to present an authentic and realistic presentation of this group of people, whose language has been creolized, or ‘hybridized,’ similar to their identities. In this respect, he employs a hybrid language in his writing, which is a reflection and an echo of West Indian identity. However, as there are over fifty Creole languages spoken in the Caribbean and they differ from each other in terms of pronunciation systems, intonation patterns, and syntax, and there is no established standard Creole both in speech and writing, Selvon opted to experiment with language and invent a new fictional Caribbean vernacular solely to be used in *The Lonely Londoners* to give voice to his West Indian characters and narrate so as to avoid the complexities of various Creoles used in the Caribbean islands (Klimkova 27).

As the Caribbean people relied on Creole in their private lives and it was associated mainly with the colonized population, Selvon comments on using the Caribbean dialect in the novel that his choice stems from his desire to reflect the Caribbean way of life in complete verisimilitude and realism (Fabre 65). In this respect, the novel tells the stories of the Windrush generation in their struggle after migration, inventing and using a Caribbean vernacular, “which is inflected by class” (Basu 77) and which is particularly associated with the colonized working-class peoples of the West Indies. This assists

Selvon to create the authenticity in his novel “which is resolutely lower- and working-class” (Basu 77) and which highlights the class struggles of the West Indian people after their migration. The use of a Caribbean dialect for the purposes of realism also functions as a constant reminder to the reader that in the novel being read, the characters portrayed are Caribbean in identity, and it is underlined and highlighted that the novel is not English or British but ‘Caribbean’ because, throughout the novel, Caribbean vernacular is used both for dialogue and narration instead of standard English and the dialect used by this group is seen as a big part of the cultural identity of the West Indies and an indicator of a colonial past. By bringing the Caribbean vernacular to the foreground of the novel, Selvon not only promotes but also embraces his cultural identity, setting himself free from the false identity of ‘British’ imposed on him by the colonial power, and his “choice of language can be considered as a challenge to the dominant cultural system installed in the Caribbean by the European colonizers” (Klimkova 31).

Another basis for the utilisation of the Caribbean vernacular in the novel lies in Selvon’s postcolonial motives. In this respect, he applies Ashcroft et al.’s strategy of appropriation and reconstruction of language. Although he uses English, which is the colonial language imposed on the colonized peoples of the Caribbean, he not only changes it to the Caribbean vernacular promoting his cultural heritage but also distorts the English language both grammatically and orthographically by “reject[ing] the cultural centrality of Englishness and proclaim[ing] the validity of marginalized voices within the privileged site of the novel form” (Bentley 73), which can be seen as a rebellion in the manifestation of literature. In this respect, by using a hybrid language, Selvon poses an immanent threat to both ‘normalized knowledges and disciplinary powers’ and “disrupts [colonial discourse’s] authority” (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 86-88). An example passage from the novel highlights the use of Caribbean vernacular as a postcolonial tool:

[W]hen is winter a kind of grey nasty colour does come to the sky and it stay there and you forget what it like to see blue skies like back home where blue sky so common people don’t even look up in the air and you feeling miserable and cold but when summer come is fire in the town big times fete like stupidity and you have to keep the blood cool for after all them cold and wet months you like you roaring to go though to tell truth winter don’t make much difference to some of the boys they blazing left and right as usual (LL 93)

As can be seen, deviation from standard English with the distortion of grammar rules such as syntax and subject-verb agreement demonstrates how Selvon rejects the standardized English language which is associated with the colonial and imperial power of Great Britain and reshapes it in a postcolonial strategy. With the manipulation of language, he is able to “proclaim their sense of place (and displacement), and construct a distinct identity in terms of difference to a dominant construction of Englishness” (Bentley 74). Absence of punctuation, which is one of the most basic foundations of a language, is also another testament to Selvon’s postcolonial strategy of reconstruction of the colonial language.

While Selvon utilizes language to establish a cultural identity of the West Indians by acknowledging it both in narration and dialogue and employs the Caribbean vernacular as a form of distortion of the colonial ideals by reconstructing the language, he also makes use of the Caribbean vernacular so as to distinguish the characters that belonged to the Windrush generation. One example for this is the constant “usage of Caribbean slang words, such as ‘fellar,’ ‘spade,’ (a black person), ‘test,’ and ‘rab’” (Klimkova 29) throughout the novel. Although the British characters portrayed in the novel are very few, the readers are easily able to differentiate the cultural identity of the speaker with their use of English. For instance, while a British reporter asks in standard English, “but can you tell me why so many people are leaving Jamaica and coming to England?”, Tanty, who is a Caribbean migrant, responds in the distorted Caribbean vernacular, “[i]s the same thing I say, I tell all of them coming” (*LL* 10). Therefore, it can be said that Selvon uses the language to distinguish the cultural identities of the characters and groups them into the categories of the colonized West Indian and the colonizer British in order to put the identity of the Caribbean migrants to the foreground.

Selvon also demonstrates throughout the novel that language is used as a means by the white British to discriminate the Windrush generation in the process of othering. When one of the major characters of the novel, Galahad, goes on a date with an English girl, Daisy, who is a coworker from the same plant where he works, he invites her to his house and they start chatting about work. When Galahad asks her, “[y]ou get that raise the

foreman was promising you?” (LL 82), Daisy answers, “[w]hat did you say? You know it will take me some time to understand everything you say. The way you West Indians speak!” (LL 82). Even though Daisy, as opposed to the majority of the white population of England, is progressive and openminded enough to have a relationship with a member of the Windrush generation and even goes on a date with Galahad, she looks down upon Galahad’s use of English in terms of both pronunciation and grammar and claims not to understand although it is quite comprehensible. In this respect, Daisy, uses language to discriminate and other the West Indian man, to remind him that on the basis of language, he is not English nor British and is not part of this country because he speaks an accented English. When Galahad responds to Daisy’s claim, “[w]hat wrong with it? Is English we speaking” (LL 82), he openly exposes his desire to be considered British and a part of this culture, and thus equal. However, he cannot get any appreciation from Daisy and is reminded once again that he is not accepted into the British community (LL 82). At the same time, though unconscious it is, Galahad utilizes the colonizer’s language as a form of mimicry because his English “is almost the same but not quite” (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 86). By altering standard English and instead, using a distorted English which is a challenge to colonial authority and that causes a rupture in the ‘supposed’ perfection of colonial power, he “retains the actual semblance of the authoritative symbol [that is, language] but revalues its presence by resisting it as the signifier of Entstellung - *after the intervention of difference*” (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 115). To conclude, Selvon employs language as a means to reflect the cultural identity and the experiences of the Windrush generation after their migration, utilizes it as a postcolonial tool to resist the white colonizers, and also illustrates how the British make use of language to discriminate the migrants.

One of the major challenges the Windrush generation faced upon their migration to England was alienation. As was discussed, constant displacement throughout Caribbean history led to problematic identities among the West Indian people who felt socially alienated in the peripheral colonies due to colonial rule and segregation in every sphere of life and sought in the migration to the imperial centre an opportunity to find social inclusion and long-desired chance to belong to British identity. However, after their arrival, they continued to be excluded from the social and economic sphere,

discriminated, and abused mainly based on their skin colour. This meant that “the Caribbean people were twice diasporized” (Hassan 179) both in their homeland and in England, leading to a substantial feeling of alienation which was possessed by the members of the Windrush generation. As alienation in England was a major issue for the Caribbean migrants, it was widely used as a recurring theme in the works of Windrush authors.

Selvon essentially forged the theme of alienation into his novel in order to reflect their struggle upon their migration to England. His careful choice for the title of the novel also underlines the ‘loneliness’ of the migrants in their quest for new lives in London. The novel’s very first sentence is carefully crafted by Selvon so as to set the tone of the novel which features alienation as a major theme and reflect the atmosphere of London that the migrants of struggled to adapt to:

One grim winter evening, when it had a kind of unrealness about London, with fog sleeping restlessly over the city and the lights showing in the blur as if is not London at all but some strange place on another planet, Moses Aloetta hop on a number 46 bus at the corner of Chepstow Road and Westbourne Grove to go to Waterloo to meet a fellar who was coming from Trinidad on the boat-train. (*LL* 1)

The emphasis on the selection of words such as ‘grim,’ ‘winter,’ ‘fog,’ and ‘strange place on another planet’ serves the purpose of highlighting the alienation that the Windrush generation experienced. First of all, a grim urban life is absolutely not what these migrants are accustomed to in the Caribbean where towns are not as industrialized and urbanized as opposed to London, England. Furthermore, the fog and coldness of winter utterly contradict with the tropical climate in the West Indies where there is sunshine for most of the year and the weather is usually warm and hot. In such an atmosphere, the major character of the novel, Moses goes to the Waterloo station to meet and welcome a fellow of his from Trinidad who has just arrived on a ship just like thousands of other Caribbean people that arrived after World War II. Selvon underlines the fact that due to the contrasting weather conditions and urbanization between the Caribbean and London, the sense of alienation starts off right from the very beginning for migrants as soon as they step on British land. The cold weather in London is continuously described and put

forward by Selvon in order to reflect the challenge that it presents for the Windrush generation in their struggle for adaptation:

On top of that, is one of those winter mornings when a kind of fog hovering around. The sun shining, but Galahad never see the sun look like how it looking now. No heat from it, it just there in the sky like a force-ripe orange. When he look up, the colour of the sky so desolate it make him more frighten. It have a kind of melancholy aspect about the morning that making him shiver. He have a feeling is about seven o'clock in the evening: when he look at a clock on top of a building he see is only half-past ten in the morning. (*LL* 23-24)

In this passage, it is apparent that Galahad, is having difficulties adapting to life in London, particularly as a result of cold weather. Although the sun shines, it gives off no heat unlike a tropical sun. The weather plays such an essential part in his challenge to adapt to London that he feels alienated in the foreign land and is filled with feelings of melancholy. In addition, the weather alone is an integral part of their struggle in their new lives to the extent that some of the West Indians in the novel question and regret their decision of migration and even consider going back to the Caribbean, solely due to the harsh conditions of weather: “Cold today, isn’t it? I bet you wish you were back home now” (*LL* 127).

In addition to the effects of the cold weather on the psyche of the Windrush generation in their struggle to adapt to life in London, it also had a dramatic impact physically. As the migrants came from tropical islands, they did not have warm clothing, nor did they need them. Despite the warnings of the British Ministry of Labour for the Windrush migrants that they should take warm clothes on their voyage to England, many came unprepared (Hunter 117). Accordingly, lack of warm clothing on their arrival in winter proves to be another challenge for them in their struggle which is denoted in the novel through the character of Tanty who is a new arrival in London. When she takes out her ‘straw hat’ to wear in cold weather, the British reporter comments on her tropical clothing in a malicious way: “I hope you don’t find our weather too cold for you” (*LL* 12). This demonstrates that the white British look down upon the migrants’ decisions and this can also be read as a hostile and unwelcoming attitude towards the Caribbean migrants. Moses, who has lived in London longer than the majority of his kin, is also taken aback by the fact that Henry,

a newly-arrived migrant, disembarks the ship in tropical clothing and even no luggage. Selvon, through these instances, underlines the fact that weather had an adverse effect on the Windrush generation physically as they were not ready for it. It should also be noted that lack of warm clothing results from not only the West Indian migrants' lack of knowledge of actual London due to colonial education which portrayed it as the paradise on Earth but also their economic struggle in the Caribbean which hindered them from purchasing warm clothing financially and actually forced them to migrate in the first place.

Members of the Windrush generation regarded migration to London as a great opportunity to start out new lives that had been troubled by lack of economic opportunities and colonial oppression. Having been educated in colonial and imperial traditions to the extent that the imperial centre was an idealized place on earth, they believed that it presented more job opportunities and better living standards. However, they “found their expectations dashed” (Mgbeadichie and Asika 55). This is also reflected in the novel as the migrants come to London in the belief that the streets are “paved with gold” (*LL* 93). This demonstrates two implications, the first of which is how London was seen as the land of opportunities by the Windrush generation and the second of which is how the imperial centre was given a mythical status, similar to the legend of El Dorado, which was also believed to be covered and decorated in gold. However, Selvon manages to reflect what the migrants experienced with regards to the city of London and is able to “offer a bleak, sombre view of the city that demythologizes the colonial myth of London” (McLeod 27). After their arrival, the migrants are struck with disillusionment which leads to even more alienation, which is also manifested in the novel by a Windrush migrant who comments on London: “Is like when you back home and you hear fellars talk about Times Square and Fifth Avenue, and Charing Cross and gay Paree. You say to yourself, ‘Lord, them places must be sharp.’ Then you get a chance and you see them for yourself, and is like nothing” (*LL* 73).

Apart from the weather and the false colonial representation of London as a city of grandeur and a land of opportunity, after their arrival, the Windrush migrants were faced

with an extreme culture shock, which further led to the alienation effect as they tried to get accustomed to their new lives and find a sense of belonging. The urban city life was drastically different from the communal lives in the Caribbean that were built upon socialization and hospitality. Nevertheless, their exclusion from social life in London and the urban life dynamics had an estranging effect on the migrants, which is also indicated in the novel:

It have people living in London who don't know what happening in the room next to them, far more the street, or how other people living. London is a place like that. It divide up in little worlds, and you stay in the world you belong to and you don't know anything about what happening in the other ones except what you read in the papers. (*LL* 60)

Besides the nature of urban life in London, which does not give prominence to hospitality and fraternity and places on its focus on individuality rather than communality, it also sets a barrier for the migrants who wish to socialize as a result of the 'little worlds' that it creates. Accordingly, the urban way of life presents the migrants no chance to get out of the boundaries it sets due to racial discrimination and segregation as a migrant is obliged to stay in the world that they 'belong to,' which in return leads the migrants to social isolation and alienation. As it was a major challenge for the Windrush generation, it is heavily stressed out throughout the novel. As Five compares the life in London and the Caribbean: "I don't know why in a big city like London you can't have a fete till morning. Look how it is back home, they have non-stop dance, you dance till you fall down on the ground, the moon go, the sun come, evening come, night come again and still the boys on the floor" (*LL* 115). As there is an utter contrast between the lively atmosphere of life in the Caribbean and the grey, dull way of life in the metropolis, the characters in the novel are compelled to make a comparison between their homeland and their new lives in London. As an echo of their struggle in the big city, they question their decisions of having migrated to London.

The major character in the novel, Moses, who is one of the first migrants to come to London and has lived in and experienced London far longer than any other Caribbean character in the novel, also offers his critique and examination of life in London:

Here is not like home where you have friends all about. In the beginning, you would think that is a good thing, that nobody minding your business, but after a while you want to get in company, you want to go to somebody house and eat a meal, you want to go on excursion to the sea, you want to go and play football and cricket. Nobody in London does really accept you. They tolerate you, yes, but you can't go in their house and eat or sit down and talk. It ain't have no sort of family life for us here. (*LL* 126)

As Moses highlights the contrasting aspects of social life in the West Indies and London, he acknowledges the fact that it is due to cultural differences. Nevertheless, he further comments that his isolation in the big city as a Windrush migrant stems not only from the cultural nuances but also the racial discrimination and othering that they encounter from the white British. Even if they wish to integrate into the community and socialize, they are barred from it because they are not accepted into the society, but only 'tolerated.'

Migrants experienced both institutionalized and social discrimination. One of the most important challenges falling under institutional discrimination was housing and accommodation. By the time the West Indians arrived, there had already been a housing crisis throughout Great Britain as a result of the devastation of World War II. It was planned by the British government that the Windrush migrants would stay in hotels or shelters of World War II. However, as they were unemployed and were unable to bring much money with them from West Indies, they had difficulties paying for the accommodation provided by the government (Hunter 56). With limited budgets, they were unable to rent houses but had to rent rooms or, in most cases, share rooms. The problem of sharing houses was even more extreme in some cases. A Windrush migrant reports her experience with accommodation in London as follows:

I lived in a lodging house with immigrants like myself and we lived in a place where the landlady we discovered by accident, rented out our room to people when we were on day work and rented the same room to people when they were on night-shift. One guy came home early one day from his shift and found somebody in his bed. She was getting two lots of rent, by renting out the room. (qtd. in P. Williams 122)

While some migrants were lucky to find and afford accommodation, others were not as fortunate because there was severe racism and discrimination against the Caribbean migrants. As Cantres suggests, "[r]enting rooms in the capital proved difficult for black

migrants in most areas of the city due in large part to the longstanding de facto color bar” (44). Landlords would not rent their houses or rooms solely on the basis that their tenants would be black. In this respect, Windrush migrants were barred from the most basic necessity of life: accommodation. Selvon also deals with and reflects this issue in his work.

In the novel, Moses’ house becomes a haven for the newly arrived Caribbean people and also a gathering place for the Windrush community. When speaking to a British reporter about the living conditions of West Indian people in London, the primary problem that Moses draws attention to is housing: “We can’t get no place to live” (*LL* 8). Selvon also voices his concern about the accommodation problems of the migrants in his interview with Peter Nazareth, and, similarly to his character Moses, he argues that housing is the biggest challenge for the migrants:

From my observation of the immigrants in London, these are the things they strive for most desperately. It also becomes very difficult for them to even get a room to stay in because of social pressures, and therefore, it acquires a greater desperation, a greater need and urgency to make sure that you have a room at least that you can return to, that you can at least retire to. (Nazareth 89-90)

Selvon underlines the problem of housing for the migrants in London not only in his interview but also in the novel as a major setback for the Windrush generation. As most migrants have to share rooms or live in overcrowded flats, some even have no choice but to live on streets in the novel. This is evident with the character of Cap, who is described as a migrant who has no permanent residence: “One day you would hear he living Caledonia, another time he move to Clapham Common, next time you see him he living Shepherd’s Bush” (*LL* 34). As it is hinted throughout the novel that he is homeless because he drifts from one place to another, it can be said that the migrants in London faced severe difficulties with regards to accommodation.

Another form of institutional discrimination the Windrush generation had to deal with was employment. Even though they were invited to the imperial centre to fill in the labour shortages and help rebuild the country, they had trouble finding jobs, and when they were

lucky to be hired, the jobs were usually “the low-pay, long-hours, shift jobs that Britons rejected such as factory workers, drivers, conductors, nurses, porters, and cleaners” (Hewitt 114). One example of this in the novel is Moses, who has been living in London for a very long time, is employed at shift work, but can only afford to stay in a small room with his wage because despite the work he has done, he could not save up enough to own a proper place. Most migrants coming to England to start out new lives were skilled workers. However, as Dawson suggests, “[b]lack workers were consistently downgraded and deskilled following their arrival in Britain” (37). The character of Galahad in the novel is portrayed as having the same fate as most of the other migrants. Although he is a skilled electrician who worked in the oilfields back home in Trinidad, when he goes to register at the employment exchange, he is told that there is no vacancy for an electrician, which is odd, given that the country is in dire need of building and construction workers as a result of the war. Later on, Moses, who is more experienced than Galahad is, reveals to him that there is a mark on the top in red ink on the applications of the Caribbean people. He explains that if a vacancy needs to be filled, the red mark is there to check if the company wants coloured workers before filling the vacancy with a West Indian person (*LL* 28). It is clearly understood from this passage that there is an ethnic and racial profiling and tagging in the employment exchange, which demonstrates the racial segregation and discrimination in the job market. When Galahad asks Moses naively if he can get a job, Moses answers: “[s]ure. When you come back to report tell them you will take anything for the time being” (*LL* 29). This indicates the fact that good jobs are reserved for white Britons whereas a Caribbean man has to be ‘deskilled’ and do with any job given to him so as to survive in his new life in London.

As Hewitt reports, “[i]n 1956, London Transport male staff recruited from the Caribbean were paid seven pounds ten shillings per week, considerably less than the national average weekly wage at the time of eleven pounds ten shillings” (114). The fact that Caribbean migrants had to work in particularly difficult jobs with lower salaries than the national average was another case of institutional discrimination against the Windrush generation. Selvon brings this issue to the light with the character of Lewis, who starts to work in a factory in a rather short time after his arrival. However, the reason why he can be employed without any delay is that the work he does in the factory “is a hard work and

mostly is spades they have working in the factory, paying lower wages than they would have to pay white fellars” (*LL* 52). With this example, Selvon demonstrates another challenge the Windrush generation had to endure, which is the combination of an arduous job and low salary.

The discontent with the Caribbean migrants in the country gradually gave rise to even more extreme discrimination and xenophobia among the white Britons in England who linked their racism towards black Caribbean people to the unemployment, claiming that the migrants stole their jobs although, in reality, West Indian people had trouble finding employment or had to work in menial jobs. With regards to this issue, Moses in the novel is aware of it as he says, “the English people don’t like the boys coming to England to work and live” and adds, “they frighten that we get job in front of them, though that does never happen” (*LL* 20). The public opposition against the presence of black people in London and other parts of the country eventually led to large-scale protests, resulting in Notting Hill and Nottingham protests in 1958, which included verbal and physical attacks against the Windrush generation. As a result of overt racism, the white Britons did not want to share jobs with the black Caribbeans, which is also evident in the novel. Moses, who has worked in a railway yard, is threatened to be fired because all the people in his workplace, implicitly all of whom are white Britons, claim to go on strike if Moses is not fired (*LL* 8). While this showcases the extreme racism against the black Caribbean people, the projection of this incident in the novel is even more shocking in the mainstream media as “[i]t was big ballad in all the papers, they put it under a big headline, saying how the colour bar was causing trouble again” (*LL* 8). Instead of condemning extreme racism, the media stand with it, implying that the underlying problem is in fact the employment of black people. After a few days, Moses loses his job as his boss claims that they are cutting down the staff even though it is obvious that he is made redundant due to racism.

The institutional discrimination against the Windrush generation was not limited to accommodation or employment, but it gave rise to every social sphere of life in England. The racism towards the black Caribbean people was not only directed at their migrant identities but was mostly based on their colour and colonial background. This is also

evident in Moses' words when the migrants complain about the discrimination against them:

There it have a restaurant run by a Pole call the Rendezvous Restaurant. Go there and see if they will serve you. And you know the hurtful part of it? The Pole who have that restaurant, he ain't have no more right in this country than we. In fact, we is British subjects and he is only a foreigner, we have more right any people from the damn continent to live and work in this country and enjoy what this country have, because is we who bleed to make this country prosperous. (*LL* 21)

'Bleeding to make this country prosperous' is not only used figuratively as a signifier of hard labour that the West Indians have been doing but also as a literal reference to Caribbean men who volunteered for RAF during World War II and actually fought for the integrity and the protection of the United Kingdom. Moses portrayed as a World War II veteran is an example of Caribbean volunteers who participated in World War II prior to his migration to England. Furthermore, as the members of the Windrush generation were born in the Commonwealth, they were British subjects, who had the rights to live and work in England. Moses compares the life of the immigrant from Poland to West Indian people. Although the restaurant owner is not a British subject, but only an immigrant, he is able to own and run a business in London while most Caribbean migrants just like the characters portrayed in the novel, who are British subjects, have to work in jobs that require hard work and have low salaries. In this respect, "[t]he feeling of traumatic exclusion becomes worse when the Caribbean migrants realize that not all immigrants are treated in the same way" (Flajsarova 24). Not only do the members of the Windrush generation do the worst jobs, but there is also unfairness and discrimination in the distribution of salaries. While this is the case, it is impossible for them to own and run a business, mostly due to the colour bar and colonial background as opposed to the white European Pole. What can be also inferred from Moses' words is that discrimination is not limited to economic well-being but also has dire effects on the social lives of the migrants because they are not allowed to eat in the restaurant run by a Pole, which vividly demonstrates the racial segregation in society in London in the period after World War II. In addition, the novel illustrates the immobility of the black migrants, where they are free to move and where they are not and how the colour bar dictates their movement (Kabesh 1).

Moses also compares the racism against black people in England to that in the United States. According to him, the racism in America is explicit while the British racism is implicit: “In America, you see a sign telling you to keep off, but over here, you don’t see any, but when you go in the hotel, or the restaurant, they will tell you to haul – or else give you the cold treatment” (LL 21). Nevertheless, as implicit as it can be, they are exposed to constant racist gaze of the white Britons on the streets, “Mummy, look at that black man!” (LL 76) as Galahad is passing by a white British family on the street. In this way, Selvon points out the Caribbean people’s constant exposure to the gaze of the other. Frantz Fanon, in the chapter “The Fact of Blackness” in *Black Skin, White Masks* centres his discourse on a familiar experience in order to highlight the psychological effect of colonialism on the colonized: “Dirty Nigger! Or simply, Look, a Negro. I came into the world imbued with the will to find a meaning in things, my spirit filled with the desire to attain to the source of the world, and then I found that I was an object in the midst of other objects” (109). Fanon suggests that colonialism and racism relegate the black person to an inferior position, diminishing the black person’s humanity, stripping him off of all the qualities that make him a human and identifying and trapping him only in the identity of being a ‘negro’ in order to “preserve the domination of others” (Karaduman 28). The colonized black is exposed to the objectification by the white colonizer, and Fanon demonstrates what being a ‘negro’ signifies for the colonizer: “The Negro is an animal, the Negro is bad, the Negro is mean, the Negro is ugly” (113) and through these connotations, the colonizer causes profound psychological and existential crisis in the colonized. This psychological effect is vividly observed in Galahad. He wants to interact with the family even though he is ignored, and they avoid talking to him. He is heartbroken and blames his black skin for his exclusion from the society: “Colour, is you that causing all this ... you know is you that cause a lot of misery in the world ... I ain’t do anything to infuriate the people” (LL 77). Galahad encounters racism and exclusion and comes to the realization that it is solely the colour of his skin that is the cause of his misery in this world.

Another instance of racism against the Windrush generation on a societal level is seen in the story of Bart in the novel. He is in a relationship with a white British girl, who invites him to their house. When the father comes, he is shocked to see a black man in the house

and shouts at him to get out. Selvon uses humour to draw attention to the racism and discrimination against the migrants, as Bart tries to explain that he is not Caribbean, but Latin American. However, the father does not listen and continues to shout because “he don’t want no curly-hair children in the family” (*LL* 51). According to Fanon, the colonial societies impose a distorted ideal of beauty which is characterized by ‘whiteness’ as in the examples of respective binaries constructed: “Good-Evil, Beauty-Ugliness, White-Black” (183), which brings about the racial system of inferiority/superiority between the colonizer white and the colonized black. Therefore, the father does not want a curly haired child in the family because it lacks ‘whiteness’, thus, ugly and inferior. Moreover, Fanon suggests that in the eyes of the colonizer, “[t]he Negro symbolizes the biological danger” (165). Fanon asserts that the colonial mind associates the black men with sexual aggression and hypersexuality which relegate the colonized men to the status of ‘primitive and savage’ because “[t]he negroes are animals” (Fanon 165) in the white man’s perception. The father “suffer[s] from a phobia of Negroes” (Fanon 165) because he wants to retain the ‘purity’ in his bloodline, that is ‘white,’ according to the colonial binaries constructed and explicitly rejects Bart as a potential father of his grandchildren. It is made clear by Selvon that the racism against the Windrush generation was mostly due to their black skins as West Indian people suffered from it in every sphere of life. As a result, it brought about desperate lives and poor living conditions for these migrants after their settlement. The continuity of colonial rule over centuries and the discrimination and racism in the imperial centre after their migration lead to their oppressed and destitute selves which become so intrinsic that their brains cannot function to dream about what to do if they win the lottery: “I does always think poor, the old brain can’t imagine what to do with all that money” (*LL* 87). They are made so hopeless by the white colonizer that they do not possess the ability to be happy, nor do they have faith or hope to be devoid of unhappiness in the later stages of their lives.

In the novel, as a result of both institutional and social discrimination mostly based on the colonial background and colour, the members of the Windrush generation are never able to reach a state of economic and social prosperity. Moses, who is a migrant of ten years, complains that after all the hard work he has done, he still does not own a place to live and he is “still the same way, neither forward, nor backward” (*LL* 124). Due to their black

migrant identities, they are barred from moving up in the social ladder, which leads them to have poor living conditions. Furthermore, they are portrayed as occasionally going through extremely tough situations, with no place to stay in and no food to eat, faced with the danger of starvation. For instance, Galahad, who has no food to eat, watches people in the park feeding pigeons with envy. He blames his misfortune in life on the white Britons and complains that “[i]n this country, people prefer to see man starve than a cat or dog want something to eat” (*LL* 117). He comes to the conclusion that in the eyes of the colonizer, they, the black migrants of the West Indies, have no more value than an animal does. The situation for Galahad eventually becomes even more desperate through the novel as he catches and eats a pigeon in order to prevent himself from starving to death (*LL* 119). It is evident by Galahad’s experience that members of the Windrush generation had to perform such dire actions so that they could stay alive in the hostile imperial centre.

Throughout the novel, the migrant characters’ living conditions never show any signs of improvement. Their quality of life gets even worse towards the ending of the novel which includes Galahad’s eating the pigeon in order not to starve. The novel’s ending draws parallels to its beginning, echoes the gloomy atmosphere of London which causes discomfort in oneself. The last page of the novel is filled with phrases such as “a great aimlessness, a great restless swaying moment ... a kind of misery and pathos and a frightening ... a big calamity” (*LL* 139), which reflects the inner feelings of the migrants, signifying the fact that nothing has changed or improved in terms of their adaptation or integration into the society. The character arcs are left unresolved and the novel ends with “the black faces bobbing up and down in the millions of white” (*LL* 139) in London where ‘the loneliness’ of the Windrush generation still continues.

In addition to difficulties of housing, accommodation, and constant exposure to racism and discrimination, Selvon carefully examines and illustrates how colonialism and migration have had adverse effects on the identities of the Windrush generation. As was mentioned before, years of colonial rule have brought about problematic identities of Caribbean peoples who have not been given a chance or opportunity to form their own

collective identities by the colonial and imperial apparatus. Already-troubled identities of the Windrush generation were inevitably distorted to a further extent and featured hybridity and mimicry in postcolonial terms. The fact that these people spent all their lives both in the colonies and the imperial centre, which are examples of the Third Space which “makes the structure of meaning and reference an ambivalent process” (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 37) and which “constitutes the discursive conditions of enunciation that ensure that the meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity; that even the same signs can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricized and read anew” (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 37). In these Third Spaces, within the liminal zones of cultural exchange between the colonizer and the colonized, hybrid identities of the Windrush generation have been formed as a result of blending Caribbean and British cultural elements. It results from the fact that according to Bhabha, the identities are always in motion and fluid due to the constant interactions and, thus, negotiations. In this respect, hybrid identities of the Windrush generation within these Third Spaces - the Caribbean and Britain – which could never be aligned with either the colonial periphery or the imperial centre were constructed. Accordingly, Selvon, a competent observer of his fellow Caribbean people, portrays culturally hybrid men in his novel as examples of this process and demonstrate their tensions in their negotiation of identities through their mannerism, clothing, language, and ways of life and seeing the world.

Moses, who is depicted as a hybrid man after ten years of living in diaspora in London, not only clings to his past in his homeland and gets nostalgic about it but also assists the newcomers in their settling in as he is the most experienced migrant and his room functions as a sanctuary for the West Indian migrants and “their collective survival” (Schwarz 6). He is also described as a migrant who has adapted to the British way of life more considerably than the rest of the migrants in the city as a result of constant process of “negotiating the Creole culture and London culture” (Liu 1199) because he has spent more time in this “Third Space” (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 37) than other migrants in the novel. While Moses is conscious and aware of the racism and discrimination against himself and his people in London, he shows signs of both assimilation and integration into the British community. He is depicted as using colloquial contraction when referring to local places in London and guides the newcomers in their quest to settle with regards

to accommodation and employment, acting as a true London local. Furthermore, as a sign of his hybridity, he constantly switches from the Caribbean vernacular to standard English, the former being mainly in dialogue while the latter seen in stream of consciousness passages, which feature his inner thoughts (Backlund 10-11). His identity features both the Caribbean and British characteristics, as he enjoys the company of his fellow Caribbean people and is still interested in the news from his homeland in the West Indies while, at the same time, he knows his whereabouts in London, has extensive knowledge of the London transportation system, and can fully understand the British way of life whereas the newcomers from the Caribbean cannot make any sense of it. In this respect, it can be said that through cultural exchanges and negotiations in the Third Spaces, Moses has developed and continues to form a new 'hybrid' identity, that is, the 'migrant' identity, which is a mixture of both the Caribbean and English culture, because he does not fully assimilate into the host culture but still retains his native culture while navigating the complexities of his life in London.

Demonstrating hybridity as a character trait, Moses lives in a liminal space, one that is divided between the Caribbean and British island. When his friend Galahad catches a pigeon to eat, just like how they used to do in the rural countryside in the West Indies, Moses confronts and criticizes him, saying, “[y]ou think this is Trinidad? Them pigeons there to beautify the park, not to eat” (*LL* 120). However, when Moses sees that it is a nice and fat one, he is tempted by it as it reminds him of the Caribbean way of life on the islands. Then, Moses cannot resist and suggests that he “clean it and cut it up” (*LL* 120) so that they can have a delicacy from their homeland. This passage reveals the duality of Moses' character that he cannot escape, one that is British in thinking, and the other that is Caribbean in practicality.

Another character that has hybridity is Galahad. Unlike Moses, Galahad is a newcomer in London, and he has formidable passion and looks up to the British way of life, which was portrayed and praised highly back in his homeland during colonial education. While Moses is adapted to the British way of life as a defence to survive in the racist city of London and “to protect himself and the other migrants and ensure an easier transition for

all” (Backlund 11), Galahad demonstrates a naïve stance as he has not experienced the unwelcoming reality that London displays to the Windrush generation in the short time that he has spent in the city. One of the ways Galahad tries to mimic the British is his dressing style. He spends a great deal of his wages on clothes in order to dress like a British gentleman so that he can be considered British as he considers the fancy dressing style as a tool for integration and “a means of survival” (Backlund 14). Bhabha asserts that mimicry is “almost the same, but not quite” (*The Location of Culture* 86). In this respect, it can never be perfect. Mbungang suggests that his mimicry only “ridicules him” (28) as his dressing is not suited to the harsh winter of London because, instead of buying a coat to wear, he prefers fancy clothing, typical of an upper or middle-class British gentleman. From Bhabha’s point of view, his imperfect mimicry, which does not align well with British way of life, ridicules the ‘Britishness’ and is a form of subtle resistance because it questions and challenges the expectations of what it means to be British. Furthermore, although he uses the Caribbean vernacular among his people, he puts on a British accent when speaking to the white British people, which demonstrates his hybrid identity. Nevertheless, after his constant exclusion from the British community, exposure to discrimination and racism, and the fact that he is never accepted into the society solely based on his black migrant identity, he comes to the realization that he can and will never be considered British. In this respect, he buys and wears a coat, which signifies his shift of character. The coat that he starts to wear is the evidence that a member of the Windrush generation needs the practical mindset against the racism and discrimination in order to survive in London, for both physical and figurative purposes.

Selvon also portrays Windrush characters that exemplify mimicry in the novel such as Bart and Harris who use mimicry as a “medium for upward social mobility” (Şentürk 127). They “negotiate and translate their cultural identities in a discontinuous intertextual temporality of cultural difference” (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 38) and they are aligned more with ‘Britishness’ which signifies superiority in the imperial centre, and thus, a means of upward mobility in society. Bart is depicted in the novel as having straightforward signs of hybridity: “he neither here nor there, though he more here than there” (*LL* 46). Showing a hybrid character as a result of colonial rule, he is more inclined to be a ‘mimic’ man because he is more ‘British’ than he is ‘Caribbean.’ Bart is described

as having naturally lighter skin than the rest of the Caribbean migrants. This allows him to label himself as a Latin American in order to set himself free from the Caribbean identity that hinders his integration. To achieve the transition and to take on the British identity, he lies and introduces himself as a Latin man to British people. He also detests his fellow Caribbean people and assumes the British stance on the Caribbean migrants even though he is one of them:

Many nights he think about how so many West Indians coming, and it give him more fear than it give the Englishman, for Bart frighten if they make things hard in Brit'n. If a fellar too black, Bart not companying him much, and he don't like to be found in the company of the boys, he always have an embarrass air when he with them in public, he does look around as much as to say 'I here with these boys, I not one of them, look at the colour of my skin. (LL 47-48)

He clearly displays his discontent with the migrants, even more than a regular British person. He does not want to be seen as a Caribbean man, going even further to explain that he is not one of them. He displays total embarrassment when he is seen with his fellow West Indian community and does anything he can in order to be welcome into the British identity. However, as light as his skin might be, he is still black and he is never accepted into the British community as he is kicked out of his girlfriend's house by her father because he does not want 'curly-hair children' in the family, a direct discrimination based on the colour of the skin.

The other mimic character in the novel is Harris who is described as follows:

A fellar who like to play laded, and he like English customs and thing, he does be polite and say thank you and he does get up in the bus and the tube to let woman sit down which is a thing even them Englishmen don't do. And when he dress, you think is some Englishman going to work in the city, bowler and umbrella, and briefcase tuck under the arm, with the The Times fold up in the pocket so the name would show, and he walking upbright like if is he alone who alive in the world. Only think, Harris face black. (LL 103)

Harris is depicted as a stereotypical middle-class British man, the only difference being the colour of his skin. No matter how hard he can try, his skin colour is a reminder that he will never be considered British. Another characteristic of Harris' mimicry is his use of English. He does not speak the Caribbean vernacular, but he is careful enough to use

the Queen's English: "when Harris start to spout English for you, you realize that you don't really know the language" (LL 103). Similar to the other mimic character Bart, Harris despises his fellow Caribbean people. When he holds a party and invites the Windrush migrants, he warns them, "[s]ee and behave yourselves like proper gentlemen, there are a lot of English people here tonight so don't make a disgrace of yourselves" (LL 104). As it is clear from his comments, he is of the opinion that his fellow Caribbean friends are inferior to the white British and a hindrance to the latter's happiness and entertainment. During and after the party, he constantly warns his migrant friends and expresses his embarrassment due to their behaviours, implying that he will never again invite them to a party: "[t]he next time I have a fete, attendance will be by invitation only. You boys always make a disgrace of yourselves and make me ashamed of myself" (LL 111). He is abominated by the Caribbean culture and embraces the British identity and culture as he also plays British music at his party. Even though he detests his fellow Caribbean people, he still spends some time with them. In this respect, he "relies on mimicry to negotiate his subaltern identity without losing the tie with his native community" (Şentürk 127) in a "space of cultural and interpretive undecidability" (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 206) and "in-between the colonizer and the colonized" (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 206) because he is caught in a constant negotiation between multiple values and identities. His stereotypical English outfit, gestures, admiration for the British and contempt for the West Indian culture portray him as a mimic man who negotiates his identity towards a belonging for the 'British' culture. However, he is in an ambivalent situation because he cannot fully lose his original cultural ties.

In conclusion, based on his observations after his migration to England, Selvon presents an authentic story of the Windrush generation in *The Lonely Londoners*. By inventing and using a Caribbean vernacular both in dialogue and narration, he not only offers a realistic portrayal of the migrants, but also acknowledges one of the primary constituents of the Caribbean identity: the creolized language. Giving details of the everyday lives of the West Indian community in London, he sheds light upon the difficulties that they had to face after their arrival. Crafting into the story, he illustrates how the Windrush generation had trouble finding suitable accommodation and usually had to work in extremely difficult jobs with very low salaries. However, as it is evident in the novel, the migration

challenges were not limited to housing and employment. On a wider scope, these migrants had to suffer the dire consequences of British racism in the social sphere. As illustrated in the novel, the members of the Windrush generation are exposed to constant discrimination, xenophobia, and extreme racism due to their colonial background and skin colour. Furthermore, through close character study, Selvon demonstrates how colonialism and migration negatively shape the already-troubled identities of the West Indian community, by giving examples of characters that display hybridity and mimicry. All in all, Selvon's novel is a vivid projection of what the Windrush generation had to go through after their migration and an acknowledgement of their sufferings.

CHAPTER 3

THE SEEDS OF BRITISH MULTICULTURALISM: THE WINDRUSH GENERATION IN *SMALL ISLAND*

Andrea Levy is an acclaimed author who explores themes of identity, race, and migration in her literary works. Her most notable novels are *Every Light in the House Burning* (1994), *Fruit of the Lemon* (1999), *Small Island* (2004), and *The Long Song* (2010) that mainly deal with themes of migration and colonialism and its legacy. *Small Island* was praised in the critical quarters for its successful portrayal of the Windrush generation after World War II and won many awards such as the Orange Prize (2004) and the Commonwealth Writers' Prize (2005) and was included on Big Jubilee Read list in 2022 which celebrated the Platinum Jubilee of Elizabeth II. The novel tells the stories of four characters, Hortense and Gilbert who are of Jamaican origin that migrate to England and are among the first waves of migrants of the Windrush generation, and Queenie and Bernard who are of English origin that cross paths with the Caribbean migrants after the devastation of World War II. *Small Island* is a rewriting of British national history of a considerably significant era when there was a huge influx of Caribbean migrants in the country after the war, which brought about changes in the British society and paved the way for multiculturalism in Britain in the modern sense. The aim of this chapter is to analyse *Small Island* with references to common themes of Windrush writing such as alienation, displacement, and problematic identities, and to demonstrate how Levy rewrites British history to tell the stories of the Windrush generation who had to face discrimination and racism by giving voice to the oppressed migrants and women alike.

The story of the novel is mainly about Gilbert who is an ex-serviceman for the RAF and Hortense who aspires to live a middle-class life in England and their experiences in London. They get married and migrate from Jamaica to England with the hopes of better lives. However, they are faced with challenges of living a migrant life in London such as alienation and racism. Queenie, who is in a difficult financial situation due to post-war

economics, tries to help them by renting a room of her house. Bernard, who is sent to a military mission in India after the war, comes back and objects to the migrants' presence both in the house and the country. After experiencing all the struggles of living as migrants in the city and facing discrimination and xenophobia, Gilbert and Hortense finally manage to have a house of their own. At the end of the novel, they adopt Queenie's baby who is born out of wedlock with a Jamaican man, and the novel ends with a subtle sense of hope and reconciliation.

Levy was born in London in 1956 and, thus, belongs to the second generation of the Windrush migrants. Her father migrated to England in 1948 on the iconic ship HMT Empire Windrush, and her mother joined her husband in England five months after his arrival (Welsh, "Levy, Andrea Doreen"). Possessing a distinguishing and important characteristic of the people from the Caribbean islands where the population was not ethnically or culturally homogenous but heterogenous as a result of slavery, colonialism, and indentured labour, Levy is of a mixed culture and ethnicity. Levy's maternal great-grandfather was a Scottish fisherman while her paternal grandfather was of Jewish origin, and her paternal grandmother was of Indian/African/Spanish descent. Her maternal great-grandmother was an African slave who had children by her white English master (Levy, "This is My England"). Mentioning her genealogy and family history is important in the sense that it represents the mixed and complex structure of the selves that West Indian people possessed, which brings about the problematic cultural identities shared by the majority of the Caribbean men and women. In addition, she has both British and Caribbean ancestry, which not only demonstrates the duality in her character but also positions her as a representative of British multiculturalism which is explored in her novel, *Small Island* with references to the Windrush generation and their importance in its formation. In her essay "This is My England" (2000), Andrea Levy herself is vocal about her own cultural identity and how she has difficulty placing it because according to her, "England [is] a hybrid nation" and accordingly, she also displays characteristics of cultural hybridity as she identifies herself as English but also "dance[s] like a lunatic when Jamaica wins anything." According to Bhabha, hybridity occurs in Third Spaces, "the interstitial passages and processes of cultural difference that are inscribed in the 'in-between'" (*The Location of Culture* 217). In these spaces where cultural exchange

develops, new identities and cultures emerge as a result of constant negotiation. Levy does not fit neatly into the category of English or Jamaican. Her sense of self emerges from the ‘in-between’ due to her constant negotiation and transformation. Then, it can be said that Levy has developed a new fluid hybrid identity which features the aspects of both Jamaican and English culture. Accordingly, hybridity as result of colonialism and constant displacement is a major recurring theme in most of her works, especially in *Small Island* which will be dealt with in the later parts of this chapter.

Unlike Selvon who was among the first wave of Caribbean migrants to arrive in England in the early 1950s, Andrea Levy was born in England. She was only two years old when racism and discrimination against the Windrush generation in England reached its peak, and the Notting Hill and Nottingham riots that displayed extreme xenophobia against the black migrants broke out. Due to her age, she did not experience the social challenges faced by the first members of the Windrush generation in the late 1940s and 1950s. Nevertheless, “she has a strong personal connection to the history of *Windrush* through her father’s migrant journey” (Courtman 87). Levy’s parents’ “recollections and stories passed down through the family surely had a significant impact on the author’s prose” (Çal 5), because in her works, she mainly describes the challenges and difficulties faced by the members of the Windrush generation such as “the cramped and unhygienic housing, difficulties finding work, implied and explicit racism” (Evelyn, *At Home in the Diaspora* 35) in England.

Selvon’s *The Lonely Londoners* was written based on the author’s firsthand accounts of the Windrush generation and presented an authentic retelling of the era. Levy’s inspiration to write *Small Island* stemmed from her own family’s accounts of the historical period and also extensive and diligent research about the lives of the migrants of the first generation in order to reflect and retell history in authenticity (Levy, “*Small Island* by Andrea Levy”). While the first generation of Windrush authors such as Selvon fictionalized their own experiences, their difficulties, and dreams after their arrival in England, the second generation of Windrush authors such as Levy were able to “map out the contours of their own identity as Black British people, not as rejected outsiders but

critical insiders” (qtd. in Duboin 15). Her Caribbean parents’ experiences and her observation and research as a daughter of Windrush parents born in England enabled Levy to better analyse the challenges this group faced, build the story on a more profound foundation, and she was able to present a portrayal of this era from a number of different perspectives.

As mentioned earlier, the troubled and problematic cultural identity is inherent in the majority of Caribbean people, which is also seen in Selvon and Levy. However, although they both share similarities such as displacement and hybridity, their approach to the question of cultural identity differs. Selvon who was born in the Caribbean and moved to England in the later stages of his life has trouble in identifying himself as either British or Caribbean but rather describes himself as “somewhat displaced” (qtd. in Nasta 4) although he openly embraces and celebrates his Caribbean culture and origin through his interviews and works. On the other hand, Levy identifies as English even though she does not wish to be fully assimilated into British culture but intends to retain her Caribbean cultural origins:

I am English. Born and bred, as the saying goes. (As far as I can remember, it is born and bred and not born-and-bred-with-a-very-long-line-of-white-ancestors-directly-descended-from-Anglo-Saxons.) England is the only society I truly know and sometimes understand. I don’t look as the English did in the England of the 30s or before, but being English is my birthright. England is my home. An eccentric place where sometimes I love being English. (Levy, “This is My England”)

This demonstrates the difference of attitude towards ‘Englishness’ between the first and second generations of the Windrush migrants. Selvon was not sure where his cultural identity lay and even if he identified himself as British or English, he was aware of the fact that he would never be accepted so, due to the social taboos against the black people and migrants and an apparent colour bar in every sphere of life. Levy, on the other hand, acknowledges that her appearance is certainly not what English people looked like before the emergence of British multiculturalism. However, she highlights the shifting notion of ‘Englishness’ and challenges the conventional English identity which advocates less diversity and is less inclusive on the grounds of ethnicity and culture. She knocks down the colour bar, declaring, “Englishness must never be allowed to attach itself to ethnicity.

The majority of English people are white, but some are not” (Levy, “This is My England”), and openly states that she proudly identifies herself as English because that is her ‘right,’ and England is her home because she was born there. In this respect, she reclaims the identity that the first members of the Windrush generation were denied and affirms her place within the nation. It can be read as a triumph of inclusion and acceptance of the migrants into the multicultural British nation. Her standpoint in the matter of cultural identities is also reflected in many of her works, especially *Small Island*. By rewriting British history in her novel,

Levy cleverly returns to 1948 not to bring to the fore Black British history, but to depict how inextricably linked it is to the development of the British nation and how it is an integral part of the British national identity. She thus dismantles the constructed correspondence between whiteness and the British nation and British identity and in so doing, participates in the re-delineation of present-day British national discourse about belonging and citizenship on a transnational, if not global, scale. (Polopoli 110)

Levy challenges the conventional definitions of British identity and reconstructs it on the basis of plurality and diversity. Regardless of colour and ethnicity, she puts forward a broader and more inclusive perception of British identity. Therefore, *Small Island* can be considered a novel of British multiculturalism, carefully and heavily tracing its starting point and origin to the Windrush generation whose sufferings and problems paved the way for present-day multicultural Britain.

Accordingly, the influence of the Windrush generation on the present-day British society is usually overlooked, and this is the reason why Andrea Levy herself is motivated to write. In her words, “for me the starting point of writing books has always been about wanting to make the unseen visible, wanting to show the experience of my parents’ generation and the children that came after, having to live in this country, quite a hostile environment, and how [they] cope with that” (qtd. in Beyer 107). In this respect, Levy aims to “emphasize the forgetfulness, ignorance and indifference of the British with regard to the history of the British Caribbean” (Vurmay 116). By focusing on the narrative of the Windrush generation and their significance on British history and formation of British multiculturalism and by implementing “their storylines and discourse counter-

versions to the preceding hegemonic presentation of historic events, and giv[ing] voice to the oppressed/ to the other to convey their own perspective upon those events” (Vasiliou 115-116), Levy illuminates the dark corners of British history and gives voice to the members of the Windrush generation whose stories have been silenced by the dominant colonial discourse.

While letting those who have been silenced speak and tell their stories, Levy, at the same time, diversifies her narration, telling the story from four different points of view: Hortense, Gilbert, Queenie, and Bernard, thus enabling the reader to experience the history of the Windrush generation through the narration of different characters with various perspectives on migration. While *The Lonely Londoners* is narrated only through the lens of black migrants, *Small Island* features two English points of view with the passages narrated by Queenie and Bernard. This is important to highlight the British attitude towards the West Indian migrants in the British society after the war. In addition, by employing narration not only from the points of view of the members of the Windrush generation but also the English, Levy succeeds in demonstrating what migration meant to both sides and how it changed and shaped England in the wake of British multiculturalism. Yet, she stays at an equal distance to her characters and “does not privilege a particular subject position over another” (A. Ellis, “Identity as Cultural Production” 71). As Murphy states, “Levy is describing, in hindsight, through the lens of history, a different crucial and pivotal moment of transition in the intersecting experiences of, and relationships among, Afro-Caribbean immigrants from British colonies and white, working class and lower-middle class Londoners during and after World War II” (123). Moreover, through the inclusion of various perspectives, Levy enhances the realism and the authenticity of the story by presenting each character’s individual insight into the Windrush migration. Levy also unveils the cultural contrast between two groups of people in the novel, the colonized members of the Windrush generation and the British white colonizers which is brought about by imperialism and colonialism, underlining the differences in their experiences, attitudes, and views particularly concerning the issues of race, nation, and identity. All in all, by blending the voices of the newly-arrived West Indian migrants with those of the white British people, Levy emphasizes the clash between socio-cultural orders, norms and values, which simultaneously divide and

connect the four main characters in the novel who are caught “in the moment of transit where space and time cross to produce complex figures of identity, past and present, inside and outside, inclusion and exclusion” (Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* 1) Furthermore, since it is a novel that rewrites history, “[t]hrough the introduction of various voices and shifts through time and space, Levy calls attention to points of connection among peoples as well as moments of collision and difference in the making and unmaking of history” (Marquis 38). Shifting across time and space and reflecting the connections and conflicts in the colonial and historical process, Levy attempts to demonstrate in *Small Island* that experiences of the characters, which are shaped by race, gender, and colonial backgrounds, are negotiated and reconstructed as they navigate the complexities of the legacy of the empire and colonial rule.

Regarding diversity in *Small Island* when compared to *The Lonely Londoners*, it should be noted that it is not limited only to the variety of points of view such as British and Caribbean. Whereas Selvon focuses his narrative on men, Levy employs two major women characters, Hortense and Queenie, the former being West Indian and the latter being English. In *The Lonely Londoners*, nearly all the major characters are men, with the only exception of the character of Tanty who is portrayed as a traditional Caribbean woman and only briefly mentioned with minimal in-depth description. Therefore, throughout most of the *The Lonely Londoners*, “women’s stories are left untold, abandoned like their characters on buses and street corners” (Courtman 90). This choice of Selvon could be due to his desire to portray the Windrush generation as authentically as possible since most of the migrants in the initial phases of the migration were in fact men (Berry-Waite) or, as Courtman suggests, the dominant narrative in masculinist orientation could very well have resulted from the fact that “Selvon was writing what he knew to be true in the 1950s” (90). On the other hand, Levy portrays two strong women in her novel, Hortense and Queenie, both of whom take a stand against the male-dominated society and are able to stand up on their own feet in such hard times in a war-torn country. With her work, Levy not only gives voice to the colonized other who have been silenced by the colonizer, but also to the women silenced by men similarly. Gayatri Spivak, in her article “Can the Subaltern Speak?”, asserts:

Within the effaced itinerary of the subaltern subject, the track of sexual difference is doubly effaced. The question is not of female participation in insurgency, or the ground rules of the sexual division of labor, for both of which there is 'evidence'. It is, rather, that, both as object of colonialist historiography, and as subject of insurgency, the ideological construction of gender keeps the male dominant. If, in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow. (82-83)

Spivak puts forward the impossibility of colonized woman speaking because she is not only marginalized within the context of colonial authority but also subjugated within dominant patriarchal system. In this respect, the process of double marginalization created "the muted subject of the subaltern woman" (Spivak 91) and, thus, colonized woman is "doubly in shadow" (Spivak 84). Levy, by including the character of Hortense and telling the story through her point of view, amplifies the muted voice of the colonized women and gives them "the space from which the sexed subaltern can speak" (Spivak 103). Challenging the dual silencing imposed, Levy also gives Hortense the platform to express the colonial and social struggles of the Windrush women who had to fight against both the colonizing forces and the patriarchal system. By portraying a powerful Jamaican woman, she also tries to rectify the demeaning image of West Indian migrant women in the post-war era created by the public and media alike. Courtman reports on the British media at the time falsely accusing migrant women of being prostitutes and morally slack and opportunistic (87-88) because as a result of "the colonial logic still presiding post-war London, the black female body stands for lasciviousness and sexual availability" (Sanchez-Palencia 224-25). This demonstrates how the colonizer sexualizes and degrades the colonizer at every given opportunity through an Orientalist point of view because Said asserts that the binaries constructed by the West portray the oriental, thus the colonized, as morally degenerate as opposed to the morally civilized West to enforce inferior-superior relationship. The colonized people, in this dichotomy, are thought to have "perverse morality" (Said 166) and these women come from places where there is "the freedom of licentious sex" (Said 190). Levy, by retelling history and giving an authentic portrayal of Caribbean women in the post-war era, corrects and shatters the falsely-created image of the colonized black women. As it was stated earlier, the main motivation behind Levy's prose was making the unseen visible. Since the Caribbean migrant women and their stories were mostly overlooked by Levy's predecessors, depicting migration

through the lens of women is also significant in that it serves Levy's initial purpose for starting writing.

Throughout the novel, Levy masterfully presents dichotomies such as the colonizer/the colonized, black/white, and men/women. Utilization of these dichotomies in the narrative serves as a tool for Levy to highlight the complexities and the changing dynamics in the social and cultural spheres of the British society in post-World War II England as a result of mass migration from the Caribbean and to present the tensions and the clashes between these groups. It also allows Levy to better reflect the experiences of various characters from a number of different perspectives and illustrate the continued conflicts between these dichotomies through the portrayal of characters that stand for the mentioned dichotomies such as Bernard/Gilbert and Hortense/Queenie.

One of the key and most significant dichotomies presented in the novel is the colonizer/colonized. Levy not only brings forth the lives of the Windrush generation but also focuses on British colonial history in the West Indies that can be seen as the starting point for the sufferings of the Caribbean peoples and, thus, the Windrush generation. Accordingly, migration of these groups of people is, according to Fondo, "considered part of the colonial process because these migrants from the British colonies have chosen England as destination as a direct consequence of the colonial encounter" (61) and "the immigrant experience therein is a direct continuum of this colonial politics" (63). While Selvon in *The Lonely Londoners* centres his narrative on the period after the Windrush generation migrated to England with minimal references to the colonial rule in the Caribbean, Levy narrates her story in two different timelines: 'before' and '1948.' While the narrative of 'before' deals with the period before the war with events leading up to migration, the narrative of 1948 addresses the issues in England brought about by the arrival of the Windrush generation. In this respect, the 'before' parts of the novel can be associated with colonialism while the '1948' parts correspond to the decolonization period and the migration that paved the way for multiculturalism in England. In addition, the 'before' sections generally "play an explanatory role since narrators use them as some sort of pauses from the ongoing discourse to refer to the causes or reasons behind the

actions and experiences they recount” (Vasiloiu 119-20). In this respect, this strategy serves Levy’s purpose of rewriting the history of the West Indian migrants by going back and forth in time so that what has led to the sufferings of the Windrush generation both in the Caribbean and England can be understood better and told. In addition, it opens a window through the dichotomy of the colonizer/colonized in order to reflect the difficulties this group faced in a cause/effect relationship. This creates an opportunity for Levy to emphasize the fact that demonstrates “the effacement of subjectivity in Britain as a continuation of the dehumanising dynamics of the colonial era” and that “[c]olonial discourses ... persist into the postcolonial era of increasing contact in England itself” (Marquis 41).

The ‘before’ time period narrated from Hortense’s point of view mainly focuses on her time in Jamaica before she migrates to England. These passages highlight the lasting impact of British colonialism on the colonized Jamaica and how it alters the identity and character of the colonized people. Hortense is a young woman who is born out of wedlock to a white British government official and a Jamaican black mother. Although she has even hardly ever seen her father, she admires him and describes him as “a man of class ... character ... intelligence ... [n]oble in a way that made him a legend” (*SI* 37); whereas there is not much mention of her mother Alberta, only when she tells about her family lineage: “I was born to a woman called Alberta ... [she] was a country girl who could neither read nor write nor perform even the rudiments of her times tables” (*SI* 37-38). As it is clear from Hortense’s wording, she does not even call Alberta ‘mother’ while glorifying her father and taking pride in being his daughter. This is mainly due to her colonial upbringing and the colonial mindset prevalent in Jamaica that imposes the perception that the colonizer is superior and more desirable. In this respect, while she adores her father, who is a white man, she does not show any affection or love for her mother, who is a black woman.

After her birth, Hortense is taken away from her mother and given to the custody of her father’s cousins. Her mother is forced to leave Jamaica and take up work in Cuba with the assurance of money from Hortense’s father, and her grandmother stays behind and

starts working as a servant in the house of her father's cousins. Therefore, Hortense is introduced to colonialism at its core very early in her life. Her separation from her mother mirrors the experiences of her people who were also separated from their families by force in Africa as a result of slave trade and is a signifier of the constant displacement suffered by the Windrush generation. This also very vividly exemplifies the power dynamics in colonial rule since a child at a very early age can be pulled apart from her mother so easily due to the hegemonic relationship between the colonizer and the colonized and proves the fact that control over the lives and fates of colonized people was in the hands of the colonial authority.

Hortense's time with her foster family is a reflection of the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized in which the colonial values, norms, and codes are highly imposed, which is the ultimate design of the colonizer for better and easier control over the colonized peoples. Fraser posits that "[t]he colonial must sacrifice indigenous belief systems and institutions for the sake of the mother country's colonizing ideals" (93). Hortense's experience with the foster family is a direct illustration of Frazer's argument. For instance, at home, she is often preached and educated with Christian beliefs and is instructed on the British way of life such as table manners. She is also taught to speak in perfect English and is demanded to perfect her articulation and diction. She internalizes this to such a degree that she warns and corrects her grandmother whose identity is more traditional and Caribbean when compared to hers: "you should speak properly as the King of England does. Not in this rough country way" (*SI* 43). Therefore, she is taught to uphold the belief that the British are superior and, as a natural consequence of British hegemony, she looks down upon the Caribbean way of life.

Through Hortense's point of view and narration, the social and economic inequality between the white colonizer and the black colonized in Jamaica is highlighted. For example, the good schools in Jamaica only accept the "wealthiest, fairest and high-class children from the district" (*SI* 44), and owning a car is "the envy of every black man who ever walked from the fields in slip-slop shoes" (*SI* 45), which displays the contrast of

quality of life between the colonizer and the colonized in terms of education and wealth respectively. Nevertheless, when the Jamaican people have access to education, the curriculum is heavily built upon British history, geography, literature, and language, disconnecting them from their own cultural heritage and identity and imposing colonial values. As Töngür suggests, it was “regarded as a very important step to anglicise the native, to subjectify the colonized, [and] to maintain imperial domination” (18). Hortense has the opportunity to study at a college owing to her partly-white lineage in Kingston to become a teacher, and she describes the students studying in the college as follows:

Girls from good homes from all across the island. Girls who possessed the required knowledge of long division, quadratic equations. Girls who could parse a sentence, subject, object, nominative, and name five verbs of manner. Girls who could recite the capital cities of the world and all the books of the Bible in the perfect English diction spoken by the King. (*SI* 62)

From Hortense’s lines, it is clear that only the higher-class members of the society in Jamaica, implicitly those that have white ancestry, have access to education, which reveals the racial hierarchy and segregation in the social sphere. The students at the school are also required to recite passages from British history and literature such as “Henry V’s speech before the battle of Agincourt, Lord Tennyson’s ‘The Charge of the Light Brigade’” and “[t]he daffodils” (*SI* 67). This demonstrates the strong British influence on the curriculum, and it can be said that through education, Caribbean people and Hortense “are not only exposed to English culture and tradition but are meant to internalize these cultural values often at the expense of their own culture” (Odoh 189). This results from the colonial policy that imposes the English way of life while erasing the local culture and stripping the colonized off of their identities.

Racial hierarchy and colourism are other significant outcomes of British colonialism expressed through the narration of Hortense in her life in Jamaica before she migrates to England. It is evident in the novel that there is a rigid social hierarchy in Jamaica based on colour as a direct result of colonial rule, which places the white British at the top, followed by lighter-skinned individuals such as Hortense and lastly darker-skinned Jamaicans at the bottom. This hierarchy is demonstrated through Hortense’s description of people. As was mentioned earlier, Hortense describes her father, who holds the highest

position in the social hierarchy as a white colonial agent, with all the possible positive connotations. A lighter-skinned individual, Hortense puts herself in the second group of people and describes herself as follows: “My complexion was as light as [my father’s]; the colour of warm honey. It was not the bitter chocolate hue of Alberta and her mother” (SI 38), and, due to her lighter colour, she believes that “there are things that are expected that may not be expected of someone of a more lowly persuasion” (SI 37). Hortense’s perception of shades of colour demonstrates that she has internalized the racism based on colour in Jamaica because she has been made to believe so by colonial education and the apparatus. She groups and judges people solely in terms of colour. For instance, she finds her mother and grandmother as inferior because they have darker skin, and associates the lighter skin with greater worth and sophistication and, thus, she believes that she is more British owing to her colour. When her darker-skinned friend Celia is concerned about the war and the possibility of a Nazi Germany victory, she thinks to herself:

I could understand why it was of the greatest importance to her that slavery should not return. Her skin was dark. But mine was not of that hue – it was the colour of warm honey. No one would think to enchain someone such as I. All the world knows that rousing anthem declares: ‘Britons never, never, never shall be slaves’. (SI 72)

She believes that her friend is concerned because if the war is lost, the Germans will make the darker-skinned people slaves again. Ironically, Hortense is not aware of the fact it was the British that had enslaved the black population in the first place. As a direct consequence of colonial education and upbringing, she has internalized the racism based on colour and acknowledges that this is the normal and standard system prevalent in the Caribbean. However, her perception of superiority based on her lighter skin tone and, thus, her belief that she is British is shaken when she migrates to England.

Effects of colonialism can also be seen on Gilbert who is of Jamaican origin and who volunteers to join the RAF during the war and is one of the four major characters in the novel. Many Caribbean men enlisted for the RAF during the war and “those aboard [*Empire Windrush*], like Levy’s character Gilbert Joseph, were generally still enlisted, former RAF” (Evelyn, *At Home in the Diaspora* 50). Therefore, the significance of the relationship of volunteering in the RAF and the birth of the Windrush generation cannot

be underestimated. Levy aims to bring this relationship to the foreground through the character of Gilbert who is inspired “from [Levy’s] own uncle’s experiences in the RAF” (Knepper 6). Gilbert Joseph as a character stands for a large group of West Indian men who fought for the British Empire and later migrated to England to form the core of the Windrush generation. By including Gilbert as a major character, Levy attempts to “educate and inform contemporary readers about the hidden voices of Britain’s wartime experience,” (Andermahr 558) who are the Caribbean volunteers for the British army during World War II and who are usually overlooked in the narrative of World War II history. Thus, Levy “reclaims this largely occluded aspect of British history” (Andermahr 558), which has had a direct impact on the creation of modern multicultural Britain.

The motivation for Gilbert and many others to volunteer for the British Army lies in the doctrines of colonialism itself. Many thought that it was their ‘duty’ to serve and fight for the ‘mother country,’ the image that was falsely cultivated to exploit and rule the colonies. A sense of duty and perhaps a chance and hope for recognition from the colonial superior attracted the West Indians to enlist for the British Army during the war. Many volunteers believed in the idea that they were part of the British Empire, and they had to fight for it in order to keep it safe. Gilbert explains his reason for joining the army in the novel as “[t]o fight for my country” (*SI* 138) and then goes on to explain what he means by ‘country’: “Jamaica is a colony. Britain is our Mother Country. We are British but we live in Jamaica” (*SI* 157).

As for the Jamaican women in *Small Island*, they try to help the British troops that are fighting overseas. For example, Hortense and her friend Celia knit long plain strips for the army and donate as much as they can, even though Jamaican economy, like that of many other nations, had to endure significant challenges during the war. Moreover, they take great pride in men joining the war whose deeds are glorified as in the example of Hortense’s cousin Michael, who enlisted for the RAF. When his mother learns that he has volunteered for the army, she exclaims: “They need men like my son. Men of courage and good breeding. There is to be a war over there. The Mother Country is calling men

like my son to be heroes whose families will be proud of them” (SI 59). Her comment demonstrates the fact that “[p]eople [of the West Indies] are trained [by the colonizer] to take pride in delivering the best for the ‘Mother Country’ which they considered a greater duty to be performed” (Priyadharshni 6).

In order to highlight the legacy and impact of the empire and colonialism, *Small Island* opens with a prologue “which frames the novel in a colonial framework and highlights the connection between the ‘Mother Country’ and her colonies” (Ibrahim 577). It is told from Queenie’s point of view who is a white English woman and one of the four major characters of the novel. The prologue is set in London before 1948, and Queenie recalls being taken to the Empire Exhibition when she was a child which showcased the wealth and grandeur of the British Empire by exhibiting the exploits of each colony in its borders such as different woods of Burma, big game trophies of Malaya, coffee of Jamaica, sugar of Barbados, and chocolate of Grenada (SI 4). As the prologue is told from a colonial point of view, it serves as a propaganda tool to promote British imperialism and colonialism, and also an apparatus for the imperial ideology to strengthen the idea of British superiority and foster the idea of Britain as the most powerful and idealized place to live. Moreover, the colonies and their cultures displayed in the Empire Exhibition are portrayed as oversimplified and trivialized with references such as “a sheep being sheared in New Zealand” or “Hong Kong smelt of drains” (SI 4) from a colonial point of view that associates the colonies with stereotypes. Advancement and superiority of the British Empire is often underlined. For instance, when Queenie sees an African woman in a hut “weaving bright patterned cloth on a loom,” Graham comments that the British Empire has got machines that do all that now adding that “they are not civilized. They only understand drums” (SI 4), which presents the patronizing attitude of the English towards the colonies, signifying the superiority of the British Empire. It is also possible to vividly see the Orientalist view of the British towards the colonial subjects as they see a group of colonized people wearing dotted dresses. They conclude that they are ill and contagious, similar to mushrooms, attributing a sense of exoticism to them and seeing them as curiosities or “exotic beings” (Said 1), dehumanizing them. The prologue also includes Queenie’s first contact with an African man “who is displayed as merely an object for the British people to look at with both fear and wonder” (Ibrahim 575) as she shakes hands

with him. When she comments that “[i]t was warm and slightly sweaty like anyone else’s” (SI 6), her father says that she does not have to “worry about having shaken his hand because the African man was most likely a potentate” (SI 7). By shaking his hand, Queenie breaks the racial barriers and acknowledges the equality between a black and a white person whereas his father’s comment encapsulates the self-important colonial ideology, underlining a superior/inferior relationship between the white British and black African as he deems that only the rulers of Africa are equal to a common person in Britain. As this passage is important for reflecting the colonial attitude and ideology, it also sets the tone for the portrayal of reality and the characters’ disillusionment with Britain experienced in the later parts of the novel. In addition, it symbolizes the transformation, and the clash Britain is going to go through with the character of Queenie who represents the progressive and openminded newer generation as opposed to the older generation that advocates for the traditional and conservative colonial and imperial values, which are associated with racial prejudices.

While the description of the Empire Exhibition in the prologue of the novel serves the purpose of demonstrating the British colonial ideology of the period, it is also evidence to how Levy places an exceptional importance on historicity in *Small Island*. Since Levy draws her inspiration from actual experiences in British history, she aptly presents details that are her source material as a result of thorough research. For instance, Michael and Gilbert who are of Jamaican origin and cross paths with the English are members of the RAF. It is now well documented that during World War II, “[b]etween 1939 and 1943 approximately 10,000 West Indians volunteered to be part of the RAF” (Hunter 38). Many thought that they belonged to Britain, the mother country that needed their help and volunteered to fight for Britain. In addition, majority of the passengers on the HMT Empire Windrush were male, many of whom were ex-servicemen that had served in the RAF during World War II (Vadde 62). In this respect, Caribbean men’s service in the RAF and the Windrush generation are interconnected in history. As having fought for the ‘mother country,’ these men had a sense of loyalty to Britain and being among the first groups that came to Britain after World War II, they actually sparked mass migration from the Caribbean. Furthermore, by including characters such as “the Afro-Caribbean servicemen and their participation in the Second World War as part of the British military

forces,” Levy aims to illuminate the relationship between Caribbean ex-servicemen of the RAF and the Windrush generation and “revive their forgotten memory in European historical and fictional records” (Asiri 19), and acknowledges their primary efforts as migrants in the war-torn British society.

Regarding historicity of the novel that is set in post-world war Britain, Levy carefully places emphasis on the devastation of the war on the people and the country. As the migration of the Windrush generation was the starting point towards today’s multicultural Britain, the war itself was the main catalyst to trigger it and, thus, the change in the country. In the context of the British society, World War II had a dramatic effect not only on the economy but also on the lives and the psyche of the people. An example of this is the food rationing. In order to combat the food shortages and provide equal distribution, the British government started applying food rationing during the war, which continued up until the mid-1950s (Zweiniger-Bargielowska 1). This is also demonstrated in the novel when Queenie and Hortense go shopping and Queenie tells Hortense: “[d]o you need eggs? Bacon? A lot of it’s still on ration but most things are here” (*SI* 331). This not only highlights the bad economy in post-war England but also indicates how the effects of the war still continue to be observed in the British society and how it keeps shaping their lives and the Windrush generation even years after it ended.

The impact of World War II was not limited to economy and the daily lives of the people but the psychology of the people was deeply affected. Arthur, Queenie’s father-in-law and Bernard’s father, is a great example of this as he suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder due to the London Blitz, which was a systematic bombing of London by the German air forces continuously for weeks during the war. Arthur and Queenie experience the devastation of the Blitz when a house very close to them gets demolished by a bomb (*SI* 272-73). Furthermore, throughout the novel, even in 1948, Levy gives accounts of how the physical effects of the war are still visible as the city and the houses and buildings are described as ravaged. This surprises Hortense because the London that she experiences is contradictory to the London that she was made to believe by colonial education before her migration. When she voices her disappointment with England,

saying, “[j]ust this? Just this? You bring me all this way for just this?”, Gilbert answers back, “[w]hat you expect, woman? Yes, just this! What you expect? Everyone live like this. There has been a war. Houses bombed. I know plenty of people live worse than this . . . There been a war here. Everyone live like this” (*SI* 21). Gilbert acknowledges the poor living conditions caused by the war and underlines the fact that it affects all the people in London, not only the migrants. As the city has changed due to the war, Levy also draws attention to the fact that the post-war city has resulted in the disillusionment experienced by the migrants such as Hortense who has not expected such a bleak and dilapidated city.

The war and the decolonization period that followed afterwards greatly changed the British society. In this context, changing dynamics of demographics due to the decolonization and the influx of migrants mainly from the Caribbean are also highlighted in the novel. For example, Queenie, who represents the progressive and openminded part of the British society in the post-war period, struggles to make a living as she is also responsible for her father-in-law who suffers from mental issues and due to the fact that her husband Bernard has not yet returned from the war because he is sent on a mission to India. Queenie rents one of her rooms to Caribbean migrants Gilbert and his wife Hortense despite the objections from her neighbours who openly display xenophobia. For instance, her neighbour Mr. Todd complains that “they would turn the area into a jungle” (*SI* 113). Another neighbour Blanche also criticizes her because she thinks West Indians have different ways from the English and know nothing of manners. Blanche even goes as far as moving her house because she does not want to live with black people in her neighbourhood (*SI* 116-117). Extremely racist remarks and xenophobic protests are directed against Queenie and her Caribbean tenants, which demonstrates the attitude of the majority of the English people in the post-war period who are absolutely not happy with the changing society. However, Queenie stands up against all the complaints, protests, and criticism, welcomes the transformation of London and “reconciles with reality” (Mahadevan 6). In this respect, Queenie represents the hope in the transformation of London towards a multicultural city.

On the other hand, as opposed to his wife, the change that the war and the decolonization brought upon the British society is inherent in the character of Bernard Bligh who can be seen as the representation of the English people in the period as he describes himself as “an Englishman” and “a civilised man” (*SI* 401). He romanticizes the time before the war when England kept the colonies under control and was considered a global power and is a supporter of colonial and imperial values which label the others as inferior. After his service in the war, Bernard is deployed in India to suppress the insurgencies regarding Indian independence. Having a colonial mindset and an imperial identity, he despises the Indians, who are in Bernard’s words, “ragged bunch of illiterates wanting to run their own country” (*SI* 375). This is a reflection of the colonial ideology in which the British considered that it was their duty and right to govern and rule the colonies because they thought they were more advanced and superior to the colonized peoples such as Indians who in their views were not fit to rule. In addition, it “reiterates typical imperial understandings of the colonized as childlike, uncivilized, and thus in need of “proper” guidance into adult nationhood” (Johansen 389), which demonstrates the disparaging view the British held towards the colonized peoples. Before Bernard completes his service in India, he has sexual intercourse with a young Indian prostitute, presumably an underage girl. As a proxy of the colonial power, he forces the young Indian girl “on [her] hands and knees” (*SI* 413), which can be read as an act that “emphasize[s] the erotopolitics of colonization” (Johansen 391) and in which the colonizer asserts his tyrannical dominance over the colonized.

After his service overseas as a military officer, when he comes back to England, he is shocked by the impact the war has had on the island: “Nothing was familiar. Had it always looked so exhausted? So friable? Buildings decaying and run down. Rotting sashes. Cracked plaster. Obscene gaps where houses once stood” (*SI* 427-28). His thoughts are the literal transmission decolonization brought upon the country: “England had shrunk. It was smaller than the place I’d left” (*SI* 424), and his observations summarize the state of British people: “And behind every face I saw were trapped the rememberings of war. Guarded by a smile. Shrouded in a frown. But everyone had them. Private conflicts. Scarring where touched” (*SI* 424). In this respect,

Levy's *Small Island* aims to show that, across the Atlantic, Great Britain's insularity was also questioned and revised. World War Two and the Blitz shattered a national identity firmly built on the persistent myth that the British Isles formed an impregnable archipelago safely separated from continental Europe, that they made up a United (and unique) Kingdom, a geographically bounded space that fostered a self-centered, Anglocentric world view. (Duboin 21)

The mass migration of the Windrush generation afterwards exacerbated the already-troubled psyche of the British people as a result of the war and decolonization, which resulted in extreme xenophobia and discrimination against the Caribbean migrants. This is also evident in Bernard's words: "The war was fought so people might live amongst their own kind. Quite simple. Everyone had a place, England for the English and the West Indies for these coloured people" (*SI* 469). As can be understood, Bernard and the British society are not yet ready for the change in the demographics and the shift towards a multicultural society. However, after the war, decolonization and the migration of the Windrush generation, the English population feel threatened by the loss of a homogenous culture and the possibility of being displaced, thus compelling them to "re-consider and re-negotiate both their sense of identity and the space they occupy" (Polopoli 113). In this respect, members of the Windrush generation arrived in the country that housed millions of English people who had uncertainties in their perception of the world and the country. This, in turn, resulted in a higher level of intolerance towards the migrants because the English people wanted to retain the homogeneity and their monocultural values in a culturally and politically shifting nation. Therefore, it made the adaption and integration of the Windrush generation even more challenging due to the ever-growing British xenophobia and racism.

Outside the Caribbean, the West Indian characters' encounters with racism start with Gilbert Joseph's time when he volunteers for the RAF during the war. After his enlistment, Gilbert is first stationed in the United States before moving to England for his training. The first shock that he experiences in the United States is the apparent segregation in the military between the white and black soldiers. The Americans' view that justifies the existence of segregation is also bewildering for Gilbert as they are, in fact, allies and fighting for the same goal: "[o]nly one that works in this country, and certainly in the

military, is segregation” (SI 132). Gilbert also compares the British Army and the American Army in terms of the black people’s position in the military. He notes that there is no segregation in the former as “we West Indians, being subjects of His Majesty George VI, had, for the time being, superior black skin. We were allowed to live with white soldiers, while the inferior American negro was not” (SI 131). Gilbert’s attitude towards black American soldiers is echoed in Fanon’s *Black Skin White Masks*:

Because the Antillean does not think of himself as a black man; he thinks of himself as an Antillean. The Negro lives in Africa. Subjectively, intellectually, the Antillean conducts himself like a white man. But he is a Negro. That he will learn once he goes to Europe; and when he hears Negroes mentioned he will recognize that the word includes himself as well as the Senegalese. (148)

Fanon critiques the internalized colonial mentality of the Antillean who does not consider himself black in the broader sense and thinks ‘blackness’ belongs to Africa. Fanon argues that no matter how much the Antillean aspires to the cultural norms of the colonizer, he is, in fact, still racially categorized into ‘blackness’ by the colonizer. Similarly, Gilbert considers himself superior to the black Americans because he is given slightly better opportunities in the army. This results from Gilbert’s acceptance and internalization of the idea of racial hierarchy and segregation based on colour as a result of colonial upbringing and indoctrination. However, he will realize that his identity will be reduced to a singular racial category, that is, ‘blackness’ when he travels to England, similar to Fanon’s argument that the Antillean will recognize his categorization as ‘black’ upon arriving in Europe.

After moving to Yorkshire, England for his training, Gilbert faces the harsh reality of British racism and prejudices by the local population despite his service to the country. The moment the West Indian volunteers enter the village close to their training camp, they are met with the constant gaze of the villagers, signifying that they do not belong there. Some of the villagers approach the Caribbean troops and ask whether they can speak English. When they answer in good English, they are perplexed by it: “There, I told you. They speak it just like us, only funnier” (SI 138). Even though the language capability displayed by the West Indians is exceptional, the British express a dismissive and condescending attitude towards the Caribbean men, reflecting a racial prejudice deeply

rooted in colonial hierarchy. When a British man asks Gilbert why he has left his sunny place to come here, he answers, “[t]o fight for my country, sir” (*SI* 138). Yet, the man answers, “[h]umph. Your country?” (*SI* 138), which demonstrates that West Indian men are not seen as members of the nation, but perhaps rather as mercenaries or distant vassals called up overseas to fight the enemy or as “those being seen as an “exotic rarity” are, radically and presumptuously, visiting the small island of England to save it from annihilation in war” (Murphy 129).

As Gilbert and the West Indian voluntary troops spend more time in England, the subtle British racism and xenophobia towards the black men become more direct, loud, and straightforward as they are constantly called ‘coloured,’ ‘black,’ and ‘nigger’ and hearing remarks on the street such as “Oi, darkie, show us yer tail” (*SI* 140). Not only these extremely racist attacks but also the complete ignorance of the British for where they come from leaves Gilbert baffled. He is taken aback that the citizens of the country that he is volunteering to fight for cannot locate Jamaica on the map and cannot even pronounce the country: “Jam—where? What did you say it was called again. Jam—what?” (*SI* 142). He is disappointed by the fact that while the colony troops know in detail “where in Britain are ships built, where is cotton woven, steel forged, cars made, jam boiled, cups shaped, lace knotted, glass blown, tin mined, whisky distilled” (*SI* 141), he thinks that any British soldier, even including the majors and generals, does not know where Jamaica is on the world map and, thus, cannot come to help Jamaica if it is attacked or in need of help (*SI* 142). This proves how strict and powerful colonial education and propaganda is in the Caribbean, teaching the colonized every detail about Great Britain, fostering admiration, idealization, and loyalty to the ‘mother country’ to the extent that they are willing to sacrifice their lives for it and even take pride in doing so. However, in the imperial centre, he becomes aware of the fact that, in the eyes of the colonizer, Jamaica is a nameless land, which they do not even know exists.

The explicit racism that Gilbert must endure during his training in the RAF is followed by discrimination in the classification of their duties. A volunteer for the Air Forces, prior to his enlistment, he dreamed about taking chivalric and prominent roles in the army such

as that of a pilot. Nevertheless, after the training when their duties in the army are announced, he learns to his dismay that he is to serve as a driver. When all the classification is ended, he realizes that all his fellow Caribbean men are “denied the right to fly, consigned to menial tasks, and made the butt of indignity” (James 52) and given non-combat duties due to their skin colour. Gilbert also notes that a friend of his, Lenval, becomes a flight engineer which is a more prestigious role because his skin is a little lighter although his trade tests are no better than any of them (*SI* 146). As it is clearly demonstrated in the novel, the distribution of duties among the Caribbean volunteers is a clear sign of racial hierarchy in the British Army. As there is no black soldier sent to front lines, which is the most honourable and prestigious field in times of war, the white soldiers are held in high esteem while the black volunteers are relegated to a lower status. The fact that Lenval is given a more respected role than the rest of the black soldiers because his skin is lighter is an example of colourism along with racial discrimination. His being given a better role despite not scoring higher suggests that during World War II in the British Army the whiter one is, the more prestigious. Furthermore, in spite of the rhetoric of the British army which is fighting for freedom, equality, and democracy against the Nazis in the war, the presence of discrimination based on colour, hostility against the black volunteers, inequality, and colourism demonstrate that racial hierarchy and colourism persisted in the British Empire during World War II.

Gilbert’s experience in the army and the racial inequalities and discrimination that he has witnessed change his attitude towards the ‘mother country’ that he was taught to revere and hold in high esteem. Gilbert gives account of his relationship with England which is personified by him as the ‘Mother’ as follows:

Living far from you is a beloved relation whom you have never met. Yet this relation is so dear a kin she is known as Mother. Your mummy talks of Mother all the time. ‘Oh Mother is a beautiful woman – refined, mannerly and cultured.’ Your daddy tells you, ‘Mother thinks of you as her children like the Lord above she takes care of you from afar’. (*SI* 139)

Due to colonial education and indoctrination, Caribbean men such as Gilbert are educated to admire the ‘motherland,’ which is idealized to the extent that it is likened to God and

even given a divine status. Gilbert continues to give details of his bonds with the ‘mother country’ with regards to his enlistment in the war:

Then one day you hear Mother calling – she is troubled, she need your help. Your mummy, your daddy say go. Leave home, leave familiar, leave love. Travel seas with waves that swell about you as substantial as concrete buildings. Shiver, tire, hunger – for no sacrifice is too much to see you at Mother’s needy side. ... After all you have heard, can you imagine, can you believe, soon, soon you will meet Mother? (*SI* 139)

Gilbert refers to England’s call to the colonies for volunteers to contribute to the war effort. Made to believe in the ideals of the Empire, West Indian men such as Gilbert consider it their duties and a sign of loyalty to fight for the ‘motherland.’ He holds the duty of helping the ‘motherland’ above everything else that he is willing to sacrifice anything in his pursuit to aid the country. It is also obvious to see his excitement to see the fabled land of the imperial centre which was romanticized in the colonial periphery. However, after what he has experienced in England, he questions the position of the ‘mother’ in his perception:

The filthy tramp that eventually greets you is she. Ragged, old and dusty as the long dead. Mother has a blackened eye, bad breath and one lone tooth that waves in her head when she speaks. Can this be that fabled relation you heard so much of? This twisted-crooked weary woman. This stinking cantankerous hag. She offers you no comfort after your journey. No smile. No welcome. Yet she looks down at you through lordly eyes and says, ‘Who the bloody hell are you?’ (*SI* 139)

After his arrival, he realizes the fact that England is certainly not what he imagined or what he was made to believe. He is disenchanted by the state in which England is and cannot conceal his disappointment. Although he initially thought that his efforts and sacrifices in helping the country would earn him more recognition from ‘the mother,’ he received no welcome or comfort but hostility and discrimination on the basis of colour and most importantly, he was not even ‘recognized.’ As a result, his perception of England is shattered, leading to an utter disappointment.

After the war ends, Gilbert returns to Jamaica. However, after some time living with his kin, he decides to return to England because of the lack of economic opportunities in the colonial periphery. He is also one of those who lived in Britain during the war and realized

that “the pace ... and economy of Caribbean life no longer suited them” (Evelyn, “Claiming a Space” 130). Despite the inequalities that he faced during his time in the army, he believes that England is still the better option to live in than the Caribbean which he sees as the neglected part of the Empire with “no jobs [and] no prospect” (Levy, “This is My England”) as he tries to convince his Jamaican friend to migrate to the imperial centre with him: “[Jamaica] is a small island. Man, we just clinging so we don’t fall off. The world out there is bigger than any dream you can conjure. There is opportunity ripe out there” (*SI* 207). Now that the war is over, as a veteran of World War II that fought for the ‘mother country,’ he also hopes to attain the recognition that he was denied during the war. He gets married to Hortense, who is also looking for a way out of the island and has the money needed to afford the ticket for HMT Empire Windrush. However, his expectations of economic prosperity, belonging, recognition, and equality are once again shattered once he goes back to England just like his previous experience in the country.

The primary problem Gilbert encounters after his return to England is housing. First, he finds a place where he shares a room with six other people. He narrates his experience in such an accommodation as follows:

But sleep in this tiny malodorous room, step over three beds to sit on yours, watch as one boy jumps out of his bed to go to work and another returning from work jumps in to take his place, have this man shush and cuss you because he needs to sleep while you try to dress to look respectable for another day, try shaving with no water and sucking cornflakes so the crunching does not disturb and you will swear those days of war were a skylark. (*SI* 214)

As a member of the Windrush generation, Gilbert’s accommodation is far from being ideal just like those of most migrants after the war as it is overcrowded with limited space. Levy herself also signifies upon the accommodation problems of the West Indian migrants such as her father and uncle who served in RAF during the war and came to England on the ship HMT Empire Windrush just like Gilbert and who were a source of inspiration for his character in the novel. Levy indicates that Caribbean migrants after their arrival suffered from bad housing, stating that “the signs in the windows read ‘no niggers, no dogs, no Irish.’ My dad faced incredible hostility when looking for somewhere to live because of the colour of his skin” (“This is My England”). The place where Gilbert stays

is only a temporary solution until he can find a place of his own. He searches for a house or a room to no avail as all the doors are “opened slow and shut quick” (*SI* 215), and in his quest for a place, he is always turned down by the white British landlords who reject him on the grounds of his colour. Gilbert’s experience in the novel highlights the difficulty of the Windrush migrants in finding accommodation. As Evelyn reports, after the war, “non-white migrants were denied housing” (“Claiming a Space” 130) and what they had to do with was “the cramped and unhygienic housing” (“Claiming a Space” 132). Gilbert feels let down when confronted with open xenophobia as he volunteered and fought for the defence and security of the people that rejected him. As he contemplates:

[i]f I had been in uniform – still a Byrlcreem boy in blue – would they have seen me different? Would they have thanked me for the sweet victory, shaken my hand and invited me in for tea? Or would I still see that look of quiet horror pass across their smiling face like a cloud before sun, while polite as nobility they inform me the room has gone. (*SI* 215)

This demonstrates the British’s lack of thankfulness shadowed by racism and xenophobia and the extent of discrimination against the Windrush migrants that they were deprived of the most basic necessity of life: housing. Furthermore, they were forced to social isolation and live with their fellow migrants in cramped and run-down housing, being prevented from social integration, which led to even further alienation that they felt in the imperial centre. After two months of searching, Gilbert runs into Queenie, who he met in England during his time as a soldier and who is portrayed as more empathetic and open-minded towards the black migrants when compared to the rest of the white British. Queenie, whose husband has not returned from the war yet, rents his rooms to get by in the war-torn economy of England. She helps the excluded and discriminated Gilbert by giving him one of the rooms in her house. Therefore, thanks to Queenie, he eventually gets a place to stay after numerous challenging attempts and confrontations with the racist British people.

Another major problem for Gilbert as a Windrush migrant is employment. In his search for a job, he is turned down by a lot of employers who give excuses such as “we have white women working here” and “what if you accidentally found yourself talking to a white woman?” (*SI* 312). Fanon suggests that “[f]or the majority of white men the Negro

represents the sexual instinct (in its raw state). The Negro is the incarnation of a genital potency beyond all moralities and prohibitions” (177). This reflects the colonial ideology that portrays black men as sexually threatening to white women and as sexual menace to society. Therefore, the black migrants are seen as a sexual threat to ‘whiteness’ and, thus, ‘purity’ of the workplace which might possibly be disrupted by the presence of black men, so they are barred from working in such places by the colonizer mindset. There are also other excuses given by the white employers as follows: “[An employer’s] partner does not like coloured people” (*SI* 313), and as a direct racial attack, “[w]e don’t want you. There’s no job for you here. I am going to get in touch with that labour exchange, tell them not to send any more of you people. We can’t use your sort” (*SI* 313). After housing, as it is obvious by the answers that he gets from the white British employers, Gilbert’s second encounter with the racial discrimination in London is in his quest for employment. Despite the fact that the Caribbean migrants were invited to fill in the labour shortage and “were promised that jobs would be waiting for them” (A. Ellis, “Identity as Cultural Production” 70), they were mostly turned down by job owners. Even when they were employed, they were given “low status or menial jobs” (W. Williams). Eventually, after very hard labour, Gilbert is able to find a job as a postman driver, which can be regarded as a not very prestigious job even though he considers it “great luck” (*SI* 313). Gilbert’s experience of job applications and his being rejected continuously and being employed in a low-status job is a historical reality, a reflection of what the Windrush generation had to endure in post-war Britain, which vividly demonstrates the racial discrimination against the West Indian migrants.

Even though Gilbert considers himself lucky to find a job as a driver for the postal service, the harassment and mobbing that he receives from his coworkers due to his racial and colonial identity is immense. For instance, his partner refuses to work with him because he is black, and Gilbert is ordered to change his route to somewhere else because in the racial hierarchy that is dominant in England, he is seen as inferior while the white English is automatically his superior. When Gilbert is carrying bags as part of his job, he is accused of “stealing from the railways” (*SI* 316). His coworkers pretend not to understand his English and racially attack him, “[w]hen are you going back to the jungle? ... Oi, darkie, you ain’t answered me. When are you going back to where you belong?” (*SI* 317).

Constant and systemic mobbing and discrimination, racial slurs and derogatory remarks faced by Gilbert at his workplace push him to the limits both psychologically and emotionally. He thinks to himself:

I could have just blown on him to push him to the ground. But if I was even to friendly tweak this man's check, or matey pat his back, I knew I would lose my job. Three white men looking on would have the story – the day the darkie, unprovoked, attacked this gentleman. Savages, they would say. And all would agree, we must never employ any more of these coons: they are trouble – more trouble than they are worth. What else could this Jamaican man do? I dropped my head. (*SI* 317)

This stream of thoughts of Gilbert highlights the systemic injustices faced by the Windrush generation in the post-war England. He is aware of the harsh reality that results from the British hegemony: he is part of the minority that is seen as worthless in the British colonial system, has no rights, and has to 'drop his head,' endure all the racism and discrimination in order to survive in this white-ruled country.

Another major character whose experience in England as a Windrush migrant is told is Hortense, who is Gilbert's wife. She is trained as a teacher in Jamaica and joins Gilbert in England six months later, just like Levy's mother who is the inspiration model for her character. Hortense is born in Jamaica as the daughter of a white British man and a black Jamaican woman. Thanks to her white ancestry, she is raised in a middle-class family and receives a more privileged education and life in the colony as opposed to Gilbert. Their marriage is a contract with mutual benefits. While Gilbert wants to pursue the economic opportunities in England, but cannot afford the fare of the voyage, Hortense, by helping Gilbert financially and getting married in return, wants to lead the middle-class life in the imperial that she believes she is destined to due to her white father and lighter skin tone. Therefore, she sets off to England with all the bright hopes and expectations formed by her middle-class colonial upbringing.

However, what she encounters upon her arrival is the utter disappointment which is experienced by most Windrush migrants. Disillusioned by the colonial propaganda, education, and upbringing, she experiences the first effect of her migration as alienation.

She is perplexed by the fact that England is certainly not how she imagined as the idealized, fabled centre of the world. As she always imagined living in England in a detached house with a lot of rooms and a garden, she is shocked to see the war-torn and run-down houses of the ‘glorious Empire’ and frustrated by the fact that she has to live in a small room with her husband because houses are not rented to the Windrush migrants by the white British landlords as a result of racism. Coming from a tropical climate which is warm and has plenty of sunlight throughout the year, she feels the London cold as “sharp as acid” (*SI* 219) on her skin which increases her alienation and the bleak, grey weather sets the tone of her feelings and acts as a reminder to her displacement.

Another challenge faced by Hortense in England is that she finds her theoretical colonial upbringing and education contradicts with the practical reality of England because “while she believes her training to be thorough in the ways of British life (and therefore in all things of value), she is in fact quite ignorant of many aspects of this life” (Evelyn, “Claiming a Space” 142). Hortense herself is also aware of this as she tells of her relationship with her foster family by whom she was brought up after she leaves their household, “teaching me English manners and Christian discipline – were they to mean no more than the fattening of a chicken on best coconut, which, after they had feasted on its carcass, stripping it of all goodness, they threw out as waste?” (*SI* 61). While this highlights Hortense’s disillusionment with the British colonial ideals, it also reveals the truth behind the colonial education system which was thought to be guiding in practicality but in reality, as she realizes it is only exploitative. As she compares herself to a chicken bred for consumption, it indicates the dehumanizing side of the colonial doctrine. In addition, she feels that as a colonized person, she was raised and educated for ‘consumption’ and ‘exploitation,’ rather than inclusion and mutual respect. Regarding the impracticality of her upbringing, one of the specific examples in the novel is when Gilbert asks her to prepare fish and chips, she does not know how to make it even though she has received extensive cooking lessons as part of her education.

In addition, Hortense who has embraced the colonial doctrine and believes in the superiority of the British and as a colonial subject “accustomed to seeing whites in

positions of power and unaccustomed to seeing white people work in any menial capacity, [she is shocked] to see white women labouring in restaurants and factories” (Murphy 129). For instance, when she goes out for shopping for the first time in such elegant dressing, which is an indicator of middle-class, she is shocked to see the British working-class people in dowdy coats with various profiles and different complexions as opposed to the monotype white British person. The colourism that she has received as part of her colonial upbringing in Jamaica leads her mind to become perplexed in England due to the diversity of the British people (*SI* 330-31). Moreover, the sloppiness and vulgarity of the working-class on the streets and shops conflict not only with the “colonial curriculum which is characterized by warmth, gaiety, politeness, and refinement” (Fondo 66) but also with her image of superior white people, who were seen as the absolute rulers in the colony and who were elevated in the social structure with privileges. For example, in her everyday routines, she is disturbed by the sloppiness of the English which does not align with her image of England that she associates with high-class and that is characterized by “discipline, assiduity, manners, superiority” (Bonnici, “Diaspora in Two Caribbean Novels” 92). The fact that Hortense is disoriented, and her mind becomes confused is mirrored and explained in Said’s example of the administration of British colony of India:

When it became common practice during the nineteenth century for Britain to retire its administrators from India and elsewhere once they had reached the age of fifty-five, then a further refinement had been achieved; no Oriental was ever allowed to see a Westerner as he aged and degenerated, just as no Westerner needed ever to see himself, mirrored in the eyes of the subject race, as anything but a vigorous, rational, ever-alert young Raj. (42)

As a way of constructing the binaries that enforced the superiority of the colonizer and the inferiority of the colonized and justifying it, the colonial policy implemented a system of its rulers that continuously displayed strength, rationality, and efficiency in order to maintain power and competence in the eyes of the colonized. Therefore, having always seen the competent, elegant, and rational colonial authorities in Jamaica, Hortense cannot make sense of the sloppiness of the British working class and becomes alienated with the colonial ideals. During her shopping, she is shocked to see that the bread that she buys is served with bare hands and is not wrapped. Moreover, she is shocked to hear the language used by the English working class with a heavy accent and actually despises it as she

comments that “[a]ll fine diction lost in a low-class slurring garble” (*SI* 449). Further encounters with the English people alter her perception of the white people and also her own identity. She realizes that the elevated image of the British people constructed by the colonial ideology is an illusion, and she starts to re-negotiate the identities imposed by the British.

While Hortense identifies herself as British and even sees herself as superior to the black population due to her English ancestry and lighter skin tone, she finds in England that she is put into the same category as all the black migrants since she is not given any privilege due to her lighter skin, and she is deemed as solely ‘black,’ an outsider and thus inferior to the white British. She experiences her first interracial interactions with Queenie, who is their landlady and a friend of her husband Gilbert. Queenie offers to teach her about life in England, which Hortense thinks does not make any sense because while Hortense is a college graduate with a teaching degree, Queenie is uneducated. This exemplifies the fact that “[t]he feeling of racial superiority drives the English to presume ignorance, backwardness and lack of sophistication on the part of the coloured” (Mahadevan 2). This points out the patronizing attitude of the English towards the Windrush migrants who are seen and categorized into stereotypes such as uncultured and uneducated and “how colonial stereotypes have dominated the whole perception of the white British and created misconceptions” (Tagaddeen 454). When Queenie offers to go out with Hortense, she emphasizes that she does not “mind being seen in the street” (*SI* 231) with her and adds that she is not like most British and it does not bother her “to be seen out with darkies” (*SI* 231). This demonstrates how the black Windrush migrants are labelled and othered as ‘darkies,’ which reveals the explicit racism of the English against the West Indians. It also highlights the fact that any type of relationship with a Caribbean is seen as a cultural taboo in British society, leading to their exclusion from the social sphere and hindering their integration into the British community. When Queenie accompanies her on the street, she reminds Hortense to “step off the pavement into the road if an English person wishes to pass” (*SI* 335), which exhibits not only the English superiority in the social hierarchy but also the inequality and the discrimination still present in post-war England. Queenie’s warning can also result from Orientalism put forward by Said because the colonized are thought to be so backward by the colonizers that they “cannot walk on either a road or a

pavement” (Said 38-39). Furthermore, when Hortense is outside, she is exposed to the constant gaze of the British, which leads to her discomfort and social isolation while she is still trying to adapt to life in London. For instance, she is pointed at by a passer-by child who exclaims: “Look! She’s black. Look, Mum, black woman” (SI 344). Even walking on the street becomes tedious for her because she is verbally abused and attacked by English men with racist remarks such as “golliwog,” “sambo,” and “darkie” (SI 334).

Even though adapting to life in England and having to put up with all the discrimination and racism, to some of which she cannot make any sense, is difficult for Hortense, she has great success in enduring the post-migration effects such as disillusionment, social alienation and isolation because she is a strong woman. However, her breaking point coincides with her job application as a teacher. Since Hortense is very proud of her college education in Jamaica, which she received thanks to her white ancestry, she applies to start working as a teacher in England, convinced that her education and letters of recommendation “would open up the doors of any school” to her (SI 448). When she enters the office to apply in person, she is stared at due to her colour by the white clerks in confusion, who do not expect black people to apply for teaching, from which they are blocked. When Hortense explains that she wants to start working as a teacher and presents her letters of recommendation, she is abruptly rejected by the clerk who does not even check the letters and says, “[y]ou can’t teach in this country. You’re not qualified to teach here in England” (SI 454). Although she received her education in Jamaica which is part of the British Empire, she is devastated to hear that she can never be qualified to work as a teacher in England solely due to her colour and colonial background. Hortense’s rejection mirrors the situation of which Frantz Fanon exemplifies in *Black Skin, White Masks*: “the educated Negro suddenly discovers that he is rejected by a civilization which he has none the less assimilated” (93). Similar to the argument put forward by Fanon, Hortense is also an educated colonized woman who aspires and makes efforts, through her mannerism, language use, and clothing, in order to be ‘British.’ Nevertheless, she realizes that she can never be allowed to integrate because of the binaries constructed by the colonizer that portray the black people as “savages, brutes and illiterates” (Fanon 117). The discrimination that she receives in the office feels so heavy for Hortense who takes pride in her education that she bursts into tears. This incident forces Hortense “to rethink

her racial identity” (McMann 204), because her lighter complexion, which signified superiority in the racial hierarchy based on colourism in Jamaica, is reduced and categorized into ‘blackness’ in the imperial centre where the binary of black and white prevails and “the nuance between “honey” and chocolate skin tones disappears” (McMann 204). Consequently, this places her on the bottom of the social structure in the imperial centre. Gilbert, who has lived through the same course of discrimination during his employment, tries to console her and introduces her to the reality of England where they are seen as inferior and deprived of many rights after Hortense has had “a sharp slap from the Mother Country’s hand” (*SI* 458) in Gilbert’s words. He then shares Hortense’s utter disappointment with coming to England which was a dream for her back in Jamaica and reveals that “not many people have a dream come true” (*SI* 464), which is the ultimate case for almost all the Windrush migrants who end up with the utter disappointment after their arrival. Gilbert proposes Hortense to deskil in terms of profession and take up menial jobs such as sewing which most migrants are employed in. Discriminated and disappointed by the illusion of England, it is the only way for Hortense to survive in London, just like the rest of the Windrush generation.

While the Windrush characters such as Hortense and Gilbert suffer from the alienation and racial inequality caused by the attitudes of the English population and discrimination throughout most of the novel, an optimism and hope for the migrants for their future is signalled towards the ending of the novel. Winston, a fellow migrant, inherits a sum of money from his grandmother in the Caribbean and is able to buy a house in London. He offers Gilbert to be the housekeeper in exchange of a flat of his own. Gilbert and Hortense accept it, realizing Hortense’s dream of having a house of her own with “a bell at the door” (*SI* 506). Although the house is run-down, “[t]hey are both prepared to transform it, creating a home and thus firmly rooting themselves in London” (Grmelova 82). In this respect, the house denotes a place where they can feel secure and where they can belong, the feeling of which they have lacked throughout their lives due to their colonial history and constant displacement. It also signals a stability for Hortense and Gilbert, a home where they can build their future together “in a space free of the pervasive racism of the nation outside” (Evelyn, “Claiming a Space” 145).

Optimism for the possibility of a better future of England based on the collaboration between the white and black members of the society is also present in the ending of the novel. Queenie, who has an affair with Michael, a Caribbean soldier, gives birth to a black baby with the help of Hortense, which “unites [them] in an act of cross-racial sisterhood” (Courtman 85). Aware of the fact that it will be too difficult for her to raise the child in a society dominated by racism, Queenie asks Gilbert and Hortense to adopt the baby and raise him in their new home. Initially hesitant, they accept it and move to their house, starting their new lives. “The baby symbolizes Levy’s hope for a new generation marked by new transcultural forms of subjectivity and belonging” (Polopoli 112), connecting and bridging the lives of both black and white characters and binding them in a relationship centred on cooperation. A new, hopeful beginning for the future of the country which is not homogenous but more diverse and inclusive is signalled with the birth and adoption of the baby that stands for the new multicultural British national identity.

In addition to projecting the lives of the West Indian migrants in the post-war era, Levy, just like her predecessor Selvon, also makes use of language and Caribbean Creole in her novel. As it was stated in the first chapter, Selvon invents and applies a Caribbean vernacular both in narration and dialogue for his novel in which the whole focus is on the lives of the migrants. On the contrary, Levy, as it was stated earlier in this chapter, uses four different narrators and points of views, two of whom are Caribbean and two of whom are English and whose uses of language vary in several ways. By doing so, Levy draws attention to the use of language as a signifier of the characters’ cultural identities, their background, and education because linguistic behaviour reveals one’s personal identity and their search for social roles (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 14). In addition, diversity of the language and “the linguistic polyphony of *Small Island* resists [the] colonialist vision of [London] by placing Gilbert’s Jamaican English ... alongside Hortense’s formal diction and Queenie’s Cockney register” (Nunziata 8). As a result, Levy knocks down the image of homogenous colonial London and her choice in the variety of language uses can be considered as a precursor of the formation of heterogenous multicultural London.

For instance, Gilbert, who is one of the four major characters of the novel, uses a Jamaican English, characterized by distorted English with little attention to subject-verb agreement and the switch of subject pronouns to object pronouns as in the example of “the man that answer the door was not Winston. True, him look like Winston, him talk like Winston, him dress like Winston” (*SI* 23) and chapters narrated by him often include frequent uses of Jamaican slang words such as “cha” (*SI* 27), “likkle” (*SI* 198), “bakkra” (*SI* 199). According to James, in *Small Island*, “language is the main battleground on which British and West Indian cultures and identities clash and make accommodations” (46). In this respect, Jamaican English used by Gilbert not only adds authenticity to his character and highlights the linguistic richness of the Caribbean culture, but also serves as a tool for him to assert his cultural identity as West Indian and resist the colonial language which has been used as a repressive tool throughout the colonial rule by disrupting the power dynamics constructed by language itself.

On the other hand, the other major character that is of Jamaican origin, Hortense takes pride in her English skills and diction that she received through her colonial education and also her own ambition to sound as English as possible. In relation to the use of the language of the colonizer by the colonized, Fanon suggests that

[e]very colonized people – in other words, every people in whose soul an inferiority complex has been created by the death and burial of its local cultural originality – finds itself face to face with the language of the civilizing nation; that is, with the culture of the mother country. The colonized is elevated above his jungle status in proportion to his adoption of the mother country’s cultural standards. He becomes whiter as he renounces his blackness, his jungle. (18)

For this purpose, as she desires to be elevated in status, she listens to the BBC, which she describes as “the most exemplary English in the known world” (*SI* 449) in order to improve her language skills. Fanon asserts that “Negro who wants to be white will be the whiter as he gains greater mastery of the cultural tool that language is” (38) and “the Negro wants to speak [the colonizer’s language] because it is the key that can open doors which were still barred to him fifty years ago” (38). In this respect, Hortense tries to master her language skills as a means for upward mobility in the colonial social structures and aims to use the Queen’s English as a signifier of her ‘British’ identity that she

assumes, which can be seen as a form of mimicry. She uses a formal and elevated English, which at times is anachronistic and sounds more like the language that was used in the Victorian Age as in the example of “this is perchance where [Gilbert] is aboding?” (*SI* 13). Her attempts to sound formal and educated make her speech difficult to be understood by the English. In her effort she even makes simple mistakes such as using the noun ‘abode’ as a verb (Mcman 206). In this respect, her efforts to imitate the colonizer’s language is a form of mimicry in Homi Bhabha’s concept because in her attempts of perfection, she makes the simplest mistakes. According to Bhabha, mimicry is never perfect, but it is “almost the same, but not quite” (*The Location of Culture* 86). As a result, her mimicry turns out to be “a problem of authority” (*The Location of Culture* 89) because her language use “displays the necessary deformation displacement of all sites of discrimination and domination. It unsettles the mimetic or narcissistic demands of colonial power but reimplicates its identifications in strategies of subversion” (*The Location of Culture* 112). In this respect, her distortion of the language, which is a significant apparatus for the colonial power, acts like a subtle form of resistance. Since she is portrayed as a rather mimic woman with her mannerism, clothing, and especially her exaggeratedly ‘proper’ and high culture English use and due to the fact that she tries to distance herself from her Jamaican identity, which she sees inferior, Levy parodies Hortense’s use of language as she is portrayed to mimic it in a rather humorous way. It is also obvious in the novel that the English that was taught to her by the colonial education lacks the practicality, leading her not to understand the idiomatic language that she is not familiar with, which acts as a barrier for West Indians’ integration and contributes to the effect of alienation. For example, when Queenie asks, “[c]at got your tongue?” (*SI* 227), Hortense does not understand what she means and takes the literal meaning of the sentence: “What cat was she talking of? Don’t tell me where there was a cat that must also live with us in this room” (*SI* 227).

Portrayed as a hybrid character due to her colonial background, Hortense also makes use of code-switching as regards the language throughout the novel. While talking to the English, she tries to perfect her English with impeccable diction and careful choice of words. However, when she speaks to her husband Gilbert, especially when out of anger and distress, she unconsciously slips into distorted English with heavy Creole influence

as in the example of “[s]he on her own?” (*SI* 28) and “[s]o, she no want’ know your business?” (*SI* 29). Fanon asserts that “[a] Negro behaves differently with a white man and with another Negro ... this self-division is a direct result of colonialist subjugation” (17). Fanon observed that colonized black people shift and often modify their behaviour and language use in the presence of colonial authority in order to gain the approval of the colonizer and align more with their expectations. In relation to Fanon’s argument, as a result of the colonial power dynamics that create a psychological split in the colonized people, Hortense pays great attention to her behaviour as a survival mechanism in her pursuit of acceptance. However, Hortense, at times, slips to the Jamaican dialect when she speaks to Gilbert, which demonstrates that when she is more relaxed and is not self-conscious, her ‘true self’ appears, free from the impositions and expectations set by colonial authority. Showing hybridity, even though she tries to disregard her Caribbean identity throughout the novel, she cannot escape her Jamaican roots. Nevertheless, switching dialects reflects her desire to be accepted into British society, which reveals the inherent identity problems in the Windrush generation within the context of language. In this respect, language use by Hortense serves as a means to assume the identity that she desires, which is British, and for the image that she wants to project because as a result of her displacement in life, what she wishes most just like most of the Caribbean people is a sense of belonging, which is ‘Britishness’ in Hortense’s case since she sees it as superior and more prestigious due to the idealization of this identity by colonial power.

Language is also used as an apparatus of discrimination and othering throughout the novel. For example, Gilbert is humiliated for his English by his white colleagues. When Gilbert asks for help from his coworkers, he is told to “[s]peak English” (*SI* 316). When Gilbert responds by saying, “[I]t is English I am speaking”, his white coworker says, “[a]nyone understand what this coloured gentleman is after?”, pretending not to understand and mocking his English (*SI* 316). As it is obvious from the relationship of Gilbert and his white colleagues, language, especially the accent and the dialect aspect of it, is used as a tool to marginalize the members of the Windrush generation and as a form of exclusion from the British society.

Nevertheless, discrimination based on the use of language in the novel is not limited to the interactions between the racist white people and black people of the Caribbean but it is also present among the members of the Windrush generation. As it was stated earlier, as a result of the colourist hierarchy present in Jamaica, Hortense, who is half black and half white and has a lighter skin tone, inherently considers herself superior to the rest of the black people. Claiming that she was admired for her diction in Jamaica, she despises Gilbert's English, "[a]nyone hearing Gilbert Joseph speak would know without hesitation that this man was not English. No matter that he is dressed in his best suit, his hair greased, his fingernails clean, he talked . . . in a rough Jamaican way" (SI 449). This is due to the elevation of the language of the colonizer in colonial rule and contempt for local colonized languages or creoles. Fanon gives examples of the use of colonizer's language in the Caribbean as an apparatus to subdue the colonizer: "Teachers keep a close watch over the children to make sure they do not use Creole" (28), and "[t]he middle class in the Antilles never speak Creole except to their servants. In school the children of Martinique are taught to scorn the dialect . . . Some families completely forbid the use of Creole" (20). Use of Creole is also despised as Fanon gives reports of "mothers ridicul[ing] their children for speaking it" (20), similarly to Hortense's judging and despising Gilbert's language use. The fact that Hortense judges and looks down upon Gilbert because he speaks in Jamaican English instead of the standard English stems from her internalization of the colonial ideology that dictated the notions of class and education through the use of language and imposed the belief of British superiority. This demonstrates the extent of how destructive the colonial system and its beliefs are as it causes not only a social hierarchy based on the discriminative power of language between the white and colonized population but also among the colonized population itself.

In conclusion, *Small Island* serves as a significant narrative that illuminates the struggles of the Windrush generation in post-war Britain. By re-narrating the history of the Windrush generation from four different perspectives, Levy successfully illustrates the complexity and diversity of attitude and experiences of both the white and the black characters with regards to migration. Levy uses two timelines to tell the stories of her characters, one of which is before 1948 and the other is 1948 in order to highlight the cause-effect relationship between colonialism and Windrush migration. With the migrant

characters' experiences in London which feature xenophobia, discrimination, and racism, it is made clear by Levy that these issues still persist in post-war England. Demonstrating identity problems such as mimicry and hybridity as a result of colonial rule, the migrant characters in the novel also suffer from alienation and disillusionment caused by colonial propaganda. All in all, *Small Island* presents a portrayal of a significant era in British history, which can be seen as the birth of British multiculturalism in the modern sense.

CONCLUSION

According to the research of The University of Oxford in 2019, it is estimated that there are hundreds of thousands of descendants of the Windrush generation living in the UK as the number of those who were born in the Commonwealth countries and arrived in England before 1971 exceed five hundred thousand (“Commonwealth migrants arriving before 1971”). Therefore, it is without doubt that the Windrush generation has made a lasting impact on shaping British culture as the Caribbean food has become an integral part of British cuisine, music bands such as Madness and The Specials that are influenced by Caribbean music have dominated the top charts in England, and the Notting Hill Carnival, which was started by the Caribbean migrants in the 1960s, is now celebrated annually in London, reflecting the Caribbean culture and heritage and attracting thousands of participants every year. Furthermore, the iconic ship HMT Empire Windrush and the passengers that it carried were commemorated in a mis-en-scene in the grand opening of London Summer Olympics in 2012, highlighting and acknowledging their significant contributions to British identity. However, their journeys and acceptance in the country have been marked by considerable challenges. In a hostile land that featured discrimination against them, the Windrush migrants struggled in their adaptation to England due to the setbacks created by English xenophobia and racism. They not only suffered from social exclusion that resulted in their alienation in a foreign country but also encountered racial barriers in finding employment and housing.

After facing such challenges, the members of the Windrush generation actively sought means to articulate their struggles and experiences in England. In the years after HMT Empire Windrush docked in 1948 igniting the spark of mass migration that transformed England culturally, “a canon of West Indian writing, as well as other creative expressions, emerged, with representations of immigration experiences that included arrival, the embattled process of settlement and the struggle for social acceptance” (Fulani 83) in order to be the voice of the Windrush generation and shed light upon their history marked with numerous hardships. Accordingly, *The Lonely Londoners* and *Small Island* were

written and used as postcolonial platforms by their authors Samuel Selvon and Andrea Levy respectively to re-narrate their history which is, today, associated with the birth of British multiculturalism, portraying their challenging experiences and offering critical parallel and different perspectives on the issues of identity, belonging, and alienation with their own writing strategies.

Both novels centre their narrative on the lives of the Windrush generation and offer powerful insights into the migrant experience in England. The feeling of displacement among the migrant characters is emphasized in both novels in which it mainly stems from colonial history and the promise of a better life in England which is depicted by the colonial power as the fabled land of opportunities whose streets are “paved with gold” (*LL* 22) and where “[t]here is opportunity ripe” (*SI* 207). This is mainly due to the idealization of British culture to impose hegemony on the colonized and to erase the cultural identities of the West Indian people for better control. It has been stressed throughout the thesis that the Caribbean people that made up the Windrush generation had troubled identities in need of acceptance and belonging due to constant displacement throughout their history. In this respect, both novels portray mimic characters whose authentic identities are distorted by the colonial apparatus. In *The Lonely Londoners*, for instance, Bart and Harris are depicted explicitly as mimic characters who despise their Caribbean fellows and look down upon Caribbean culture. Similarly in *Small Island*, Hortense is a mimic character due to her colonial upbringing who aspires to be ‘British’ despite her black skin, sees the English as superior and labels the Caribbean way of life inferior.

In both novels, the characters migrate to England to overcome their sense of lacking belonging, by becoming ‘totally British’ in the imperial centre. However, the characters’ dreams are dashed by the white English population dominated by racism and xenophobia, pushing them to the limits of social exclusion and alienation. Both authors give instances of migrants confronted by overt racism in the social sphere. Discrimination in finding employment and housing are also stressed throughout the novels, the latter of which is emphasized by both Selvon who thought finding a place to live was the biggest challenge

for Windrush migrants (Nazareth 89-90) and Levy who gave reports of her Windrush parents that “had a period of being homeless” and “had to live in one room for many years” (Levy, “Back to My Own Country”). The gloomy English weather as opposed to the sunny West Indian weather and the urban landscape of London in contrast to the rural towns of the Caribbean also further increase the migrants’ alienation in both novels.

Both authors make use of language in the novels, which serves as a strong tool for exploring and understanding the migrant experience with regards to cultural identity. However, they differ in their approaches. Selvon invents a Creolized English and uses it both for dialogue and narration for the entirety of his novel. Distorting the colonial language English as a postcolonial tool to write back to the colonizer in order to illuminate the hardships of the Windrush generation, Selvon also brings the Creolized English to the foreground, “transforming Creole into an expression of Caribbean culture” (Birat 831), thus marking his novel as Caribbean. The migrant characters also utilize their language “as a shield” to protect themselves “from the assaults of a hostile world” (Birat 828) since it is a significant constituent of their identities. On the other hand, while Levy also employs Creolized English for the Caribbean migrants such as Hortense and Gilbert, various types of language use such as Creole, Cockney, and Queen’s English are also featured in the novel. In *Small Island*, it is also possible to see instances of code-switching among the Windrush migrants in their language properties as a means to assume British identity, which demonstrates the apparent hybridity in the formation of their characters. All in all, as regards the language in both novels, Selvon incorporates the Caribbean identity into his work by using solely the Creolized English both for dialogue and narration throughout the novel, whereas Levy, besides acknowledging the Creolized English used by the Caribbean migrants as a form of cultural identity, underlines and celebrates the diversity of language uses in England, which can be associated with British multiculturalism.

Another difference lies in the forms of the novels. While *The Lonely Londoners* lacks a conventional plot structure, centres its narrative on fragmented stories of the migrants with frequent uses of stream of consciousness, and is “episodic in its presentation” (A.

Ellis, “The Imperfect Longing” 180), *Small Island* features a more traditional plotline with frequent flashbacks of characters, resulting in a cause-effect relationship within the context of Caribbean migration. Selvon does not diversify his narration in his novel, focusing solely on the experiences of black migrants in London, told in short episodes from a Caribbean point of view. On the other hand, Levy divides the novel into sections which are narrated through the viewpoints of four different characters, two of whom are Caribbean man and woman, and two of whom are English man and woman. With this choice of Levy’s, she varies her narration and offers distinctive and multi-layered perspectives on the issue of migration. Considering the choices of authors for the forms of the novels, it is possible to conclude that Selvon offers a case study of the Windrush generation concentrating solely on their experiences in the aftermath of their migration with an episodic structure in a documentary-like fashion. On the other hand, Levy suggests critical insights into the Windrush migration from different perspectives of the nation and, with frequent flashbacks of the time before migration, she examines the powerful experiences of characters in a cause-effect relationship.

While *The Lonely Londoners* and *Small Island* are set mainly in London and roughly in the same period, the use of time is another difference between the two novels. Selvon focuses solely on the era after migration with no mention of or a reference to the colonial history of the Caribbean where the migrants come from. In this respect, he places his emphasis on the migration process and the immediate challenges it presented for the West Indian migrants. Therefore, for Selvon, migration itself is the central theme of his work, focusing solely on the lived experiences of the Windrush generation rather than the historical context. Another significant reason for Selvon’s choice about disregarding colonial history without romanticising it or dwelling upon it is the fact that he views migration as the major constituent of his identity and similarly of the Windrush generation. As it was mentioned earlier, Selvon acknowledges migration as the catalyst that triggers the formation of his Caribbean identity (Selvon, “Finding West Indian Identity” 36). Accordingly, Selvon considers migration as the turning point of his life, stating that “[o]nly in London did my life find its purpose” (qtd. in Fabre 76). Therefore, migration played a great role in forming and shaping Selvon’s and similarly the Caribbean migrants’ cultural identities. As a result, a new cultural identity emerged within the

context of the Windrush migration and Selvon, by focusing solely on migration in his novel, aims to bring migration and the new cultural identity it created to the foreground.

On the other hand, *Small Island* focuses on the time both before and after migration, presenting the novel in two parts: '1948' and 'before'. The 'before' parts address colonialism and the colonial practices both in the colonial periphery and centre. These sections include the presence of the colonial authority that asserts its dominance on the system based on racial hierarchy and colourism over the colonized people and the utilization of the colonial apparatus such as education in the Caribbean. The portrayal of the Empire Exhibition in the imperial capital in the prologue of the novel also represents the grandeur of the Empire and the colonial hegemony that it presides over the colonized nations. Building her story on the historicity of colonialism and structuring the novel around a cause-and-effect relationship, Levy asserts that the Windrush arrival was not an "abrupt and disruptive moment but ... part of a more extended history" (Cai 20) explicitly rooted in the British colonialism.

Regarding historicity, Levy uses the war as one of the main thematic elements of her novel while the war is only briefly mentioned and referred to in *The Lonely Londoners*. As Levy makes use of historicity in her novel, the war plays a significant role in shaping both the Caribbean and English characters' lives and consequently the nation in the bigger picture. The destruction of the war and the terror it inflicts upon the country are vividly described by Levy throughout the novel through depictions of war-torn buildings and ruined houses. The trauma of the war and the psychological impact of decolonization beginning with the end of the war are detailed with characters such as Arthur and Bernard respectively. The Caribbean men who served as volunteers in the RAF during the war and became the pioneers of migration after the war are also referred to in the novel with the inclusion of characters such as Michael and Gilbert, and their efforts are acknowledged in shaping today's multicultural Britain. All in all, Levy's focus on the war as one of the central themes of her novel signifies that she views it as the main catalyst that triggered Windrush migration and correspondingly changed the country's history with a shift towards multiculturalism.

Another distinction between the novels can be found in the use of characters and the presentation of their development. In *The Lonely Londoners*, the characters are mostly West Indian men with the exception of Tanty, who is a woman. This is a direct parallelism of the Windrush generation that was mainly made up of Caribbean men and ex-servicemen of the RAF. The story focuses on the lives of West Indian men while there are very few major white characters in the novel who are given mostly subsidiary roles. On the other hand, *Small Island* features two major white characters along with two major Caribbean characters. In addition, Levy also includes two women characters whose personalities are described in great depth and given prominence in the plotline. While Selvon employs almost no women characters, and those who are portrayed are nameless, Levy's women are presented as strong individuals who have the power to stand up against the norms and codes of the era. While Selvon neglects the women characters, centring his novel on the experiences of West Indian men, Levy diversifies her narration, giving perspectives of the white, the black, the woman and the man. This allows Levy to rewrite the history of migration from different points of view. Additionally, as Levy's aim to start writing is making "the unseen visible" (qtd. in Beyer 107), her choice to portray women and also tell their stories, which are overlooked by her predecessor Selvon, serves her purpose in an effective way.

The Lonely Londoners does not feature extensive character development as it focuses on the collective struggles and experiences of the Windrush generation. In this respect, instead of examining the individuals in depth, Selvon highlights the community of the migrants and the ghettoization aspect of migration in forming their identities through an exchange of shared stories and experiences. On the other hand, *Small Island* focuses on the individuals and their shifts in character development. For instance, Gilbert who identifies himself as British and even volunteers for the RAF during the war changes his stance on British identity after facing discrimination in various ways and realizing that he was deceived by the colonial system. While *The Lonely Londoners* showcases the migrants' fraternity in their struggle and exclusion from the British society as an important aspect of ghettoization and diaspora, there is little reference to the collaboration among the migrants in *Small Island* which concentrates on the interactions between the Windrush

generation and the white English characters. This distinction between the novels is due to the general tones of the novels and how authors view and project the Windrush migration.

Overall, Selvon offers a more pessimistic and bleaker perspective towards migration and its outcome. The members of the Windrush generation are confronted with continuous discrimination and racism throughout the novel, and Selvon does not depict any positive interactions or relationships between the black migrants and the white English. Trapped and stuck in a stasis because “the British social structures prevent upward mobility, particularly to immigrants given that they are perceived as invasive and threatening to the setup of society” (Usongo 192), the lives of migrant characters in the novel can never improve. As a matter of fact, their situations are portrayed as deteriorating even more to the extent that they catch and eat a pigeon to avoid starvation. Towards the ending of the novel, the protagonist Moses, standing on the banks of the river Thames, is contemplating on his life choices such as migrating to England, and he cannot decide if he should go back to the Caribbean or stay in England for one more year because he is stuck “in a state of inbetweenness” (Flajsarova 22) as a migrant with troubled cultural identity. During his contemplation, he feels “[a]s if a forlorn shadow of doom fall on all the spades in the country” and he sees “the spades jostling in the crowd, bewildered, hopeless” (LL 139). The ending of the novel in which the migrants’ problems are left unresolved, and their dreams are not fulfilled demonstrates Selvon’s stance towards the outcome of migration and projection of the Windrush generation, signifying that the migrants are in an endless cycle of struggle and an ongoing survival and there is no hope for future.

On the other hand, *Small Island* presents a more optimistic and brighter future for the Windrush generation. Although the migrant characters are confronted with hostility from most of the English population in the novel, Queenie, who sympathizes with them and actually helps them by renting them a room, symbolizes the hope for collaboration and co-existence of the white and black population of England. At the end of the novel, the Windrush migrants Gilbert and Hortense come to terms with their identities and manage to have a house of their own. In this respect, unlike the characters in *The Lonely Londoners* whose problems are left unresolved, “the condition of non-belonging is not

accepted by Gilbert and Hortense but contested” (Grmelova 82). Furthermore, Queenie has an extramarital relationship with a Jamaican soldier during the war and a baby is born. Furious with the birth of the baby, Bernard, Queenie’s husband, does not accept the baby’s presence in his household and the couple offer to give the baby to Hortense and Gilbert who accept to adopt it. In this respect, “the future of a multicultural Britain is signalled by the birth of a mixed-race child” (Courtman 85), and the baby symbolizes not only the hope and a brighter future for the Windrush generation but also the change and the transformation England is going to go through towards multiculturalism. With the birth of the baby, Levy fosters the idea of a multicultural British identity and celebrates it.

In conclusion, both *The Lonely Londoners* and *Small Island* are significant works in Caribbean-British literature, depicting the challenges such as racism, xenophobia, discrimination, and alienation the Windrush generation had to endure after their arrival in England. Although the novels studied in this thesis differ in their approaches and perspectives in telling the story of these migrants, they work towards the same goal: shedding light upon the hardships of a significant group of people who sparked British multiculturalism of today. Despite the works such as *The Lonely Londoners* and *Small Island* written to highlight the Windrush generation and aim to raise awareness of the struggles they faced, the problems regarding their status in the country still persist in the twenty-first century as the Windrush Scandal broke out in 2018. As a result of the 2012 immigration policy and due to a lack of documentation to confirm their status because children travelled on their parents’ passports, some descendants of the Windrush generation were denied employment, access to their bank accounts, healthcare and other state benefits and even destitution, detention and deportation because they were regarded as illegal immigrants (Hewitt 108-109). However, after the media and public backlash, “the government has admitted failings and devised a scheme to compensate those directly impacted” (Stein and Shankley 141). Hewitt reports that despite the official announcement that the British government would pay up to two hundred million pounds sterling in compensation to people whose lives were negatively affected by the Home Office’s mistaken classification, only a handful of payments have been made (123-24). All in all, this demonstrates the fact that the Windrush generation still grapples with their struggles in the twenty-first century, a continuum of their sufferings which dates back to

1948 when HMT Empire Windrush docked in England and even further back in time in colonial history. In this respect, one hopes that this thesis raises awareness and brings greater recognition to the Windrush generation and inspires and paves the way for further academic research for this goal.

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APPENDIX 1 ORIGINALITY REPORT

	HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ	Doküman Kodu Form No.	FRM-YL-15
		Yayın Tarihi Date of Pub.	04.12.2023
	FRM-YL-15 Yüksek Lisans Tezi Orijinallik Raporu Master's Thesis Dissertation Originality Report	Revizyon No Rev. No.	02
		Revizyon Tarihi Rev. Date	25.01.2024

**HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI ANABİLİM DALI BAŞKANLIĞINA**

Tarih: 23/01/2025

Tez Başlığı: ANAYURTTA ÖTEKİLER: *THE LONELY LONDONERS* VE *SMALL ISLAND*'DAKİ WINDRUSH JENERASYONUNUN SÖMÜRGE SONRASI OKUMASI

Yukarıda başlığı verilen tezimin a) Kapak sayfası, b) Giriş, c) Ana bölümler ve d) Sonuç kısımlarından oluşan toplam 106 sayfalık kısmına ilişkin, 23/01/2025 tarihinde şahsım/tez danışmanım tarafından Turnitin adlı intihal tespit programından aşağıda işaretlenmiş filtrelemeler uygulanarak alınmış olan orijinallik raporuna göre, tezimin benzerlik oranı % 5'dir.

Uygulanan filtrelemeler*:

- Kabul/Onay ve Bildirim sayfaları hariç
- Kaynakça hariç
- Alıntılar hariç
- Alıntılar dâhil
- 5 kelimedenden daha az örtüşme içeren metin kısımları hariç

Hacettepe Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Tez Çalışması Orijinallik Raporu Alınması ve Kullanılması Uygulama Esasları'nı inceledim ve bu Uygulama Esasları'nda belirtilen azami benzerlik oranlarına göre tezimin herhangi bir intihal içermediğini; aksinin tespit edileceği muhtemel durumlarda doğabilecek her türlü hukuki sorumluluğu kabul ettiğimi ve yukarıda vermiş olduğum bilgilerin doğru olduğunu beyan ederim.

Gereğini saygılarımla arz ederim.

Tahsin ULUTAŞ

Öğrenci Bilgileri	Ad-Soyad	TAHSİN ULUTAŞ
	Öğrenci No	N22129368
	Enstitü Anabilim Dalı	İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI
	Programı	İNGİLİZ KÜLTÜR ARAŞTIRMALARI (YL)

DANIŞMAN ONAYI

UYGUNDUR.
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* Tez Almanca veya Fransızca yazılıyor ise bu kısımda tez başlığı Tez Yazım Dilinde yazılmalıdır.

**Hacettepe Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Tez Çalışması Orijinallik Raporu Alınması ve Kullanılması Uygulama Esasları İkinci bölüm madde (4)'te de belirtildiği üzere: Kaynakça hariç, Alıntılar hariç/dahil, 5 kelimedenden daha az örtüşme içeren metin kısımları hariç (Limit match size to 5 words) filtreleme yapılmalıdır.

	HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ	Doküman Kodu Form No.	FRM-YL-15
		Yayın Tarihi Date of Pub.	04.12.2023
	FRM-YL-15 Yüksek Lisans Tezi Orijinallik Raporu <i>Master's Thesis Dissertation Originality Report</i>	Revizyon No Rev. No.	02
		Revizyon Tarihi Rev.Date	25.01.2024

TO HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Date: 23/01/2025

Thesis Title (In English): THE OTHERS IN THE MOTHERLAND: A POSTCOLONIAL READING OF THE WINDRUSH GENERATION IN *THE LONELY LONDONERS* AND *SMALL ISLAND*

According to the originality report obtained by myself/my thesis advisor by using the Turnitin plagiarism detection software and by applying the filtering options checked below on 23/01/2025 for the total of 106 pages including the a) Title Page, b) Introduction, c) Main Chapters, and d) Conclusion sections of my thesis entitled above, the similarity index of my thesis is 5 %.

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Kindly submitted for the necessary actions.

Tahsin ULUTAŞ

Student Information	Name-Surname	TAHSİN ULUTAŞ
	Student Number	N22129368
	Department	ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
	Programme	BRITISH CULTURAL STUDIES (MA)

SUPERVISOR'S APPROVAL

APPROVED
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Alev KARADUMAN

APPENDIX 2 . ETHICS BOARD WAIVER FORM

	HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ	Doküman Kodu Form No.	FRM-YL-09
		Yayın Tarihi Date of Pub.	22.11.2023
	FRM-YL-09 Yüksek Lisans Tezi Etik Kurul Muafiyeti Formu <i>Ethics Board Form for Master's Thesis</i>	Revizyon No Rev. No.	02
		Revizyon Tarihi Rev.Date	25.01.2024

HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI ANABİLİM DALI BAŞKANLIĞINA	
Tarih: 16/12/2024	
Tez Başlığı (Türkçe): ANAYURTTA ÖTEKİLER: <i>THE LONELY LONDONERS</i> VE <i>SMALL ISLAND</i> 'DAKİ WINDRUSH JENERASYONUNUN SÖMÜRGE SONRASI OKUMASI	
Yukarıda başlığı verilen tez çalışmam:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. İnsan ve hayvan üzerinde deney niteliği taşımamaktadır. 2. Biyolojik materyal (kan, idrar vb. biyolojik sıvılar ve numuneler) kullanılmasını gerektirmemektedir. 3. Beden bütünlüğüne veya ruh sağlığına müdahale içermemektedir. 4. Anket, ölçek (test), mülakat, odak grup çalışması, gözlem, deney, görüşme gibi teknikler kullanılarak katılımcılardan veri toplanmasını gerektiren nitel ya da nicel yaklaşımlarla yürütülen araştırma niteliğinde değildir. 5. Diğer kişi ve kurumlardan temin edilen veri kullanımını (kitap, belge vs.) gerektirmektedir. Ancak bu kullanım, diğer kişi ve kurumların izin verdiği ölçüde Kişisel Bilgilerin Korunması Kanuna riayet edilerek gerçekleştirilecektir. 	
Hacettepe Üniversitesi Etik Kurullarının Yönergelerini inceledim ve bunlara göre çalışmamın yürütülebilmesi için herhangi bir Etik Kuruldan izin alınmasına gerek olmadığını; aksi durumda doğabilecek her türlü hukuki sorumluluğu kabul ettiğimi ve yukarıda vermiş olduğum bilgilerin doğru olduğunu beyan ederim.	
Gereğini saygılarımla arz ederim.	
Tahsin ULUTAŞ	

Öğrenci Bilgileri	Ad-Soyad	TAHSİN ULUTAŞ
	Öğrenci No	N22129368
	Enstitü Anabilim Dalı	İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI
	Programı	İNGİLİZ KÜLTÜR ARAŞTIRMALARI (YL)

DANIŞMAN ONAYI

UYGUNDUR.
Doç. Dr. Alev KARADUMAN

* Tez Almanca veya Fransızca yazılıyor ise bu kısımda tez başlığı **Tez Yazım Dilinde** yazılmalıdır.

	HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ	Doküman Kodu Form No.	FRM-YL-09
		Yayın Tarihi Date of Pub.	22.11.2023
	FRM-YL-09 Yüksek Lisans Tezi Etik Kurul Muafiyeti Formu <i>Ethics Board Form for Master's Thesis</i>	Revizyon No Rev. No.	02
		Revizyon Tarihi Rev.Date	25.01.2024

HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE	
Date: 16/12/2024	
ThesisTitle (In English): THE OTHERS IN THE MOTHERLAND: A POSTCOLONIAL READING OF THE WINDRUSH GENERATION IN <i>THE LONELY LONDONERS</i> AND <i>SMALL ISLAND</i>	
My thesis work with the title given above:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Does not perform experimentation on people or animals. Does not necessitate the use of biological material (blood, urine, biological fluids and samples, etc.). Does not involve any interference of the body's integrity. Is not a research conducted with qualitative or quantitative approaches that require data collection from the participants by using techniques such as survey, scale (test), interview, focus group work, observation, experiment, interview. Requires the use of data (books, documents, etc.) obtained from other people and institutions. However, this use will be carried out in accordance with the Personal Information Protection Law to the extent permitted by other persons and institutions. 	
I hereby declare that I reviewed the Directives of Ethics Boards of Hacettepe University and in regard to these directives it is not necessary to obtain permission from any Ethics Board in order to carry out my thesis study; I accept all legal responsibilities that may arise in any infringement of the directives and that the information I have given above is correct.	
I respectfully submit this for approval.	
Tahsin ULUTAŞ	

Student Information	Name-Surname	TAHSIN ULUTAŞ
	Student Number	N22129368
	Department	ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
	Programme	BRITISH CULTURAL STUDIES (MA)

SUPERVISOR'S APPROVAL

APPROVED
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Alev KARADUMAN