"this dirt and shame called Balham, this coon condition, this ignorance that prevents me from knowing anything, not even who we are, who they are." (p.230)

He is trapped in history, incapable of transcending the text written **for** him but not **by** him. Likewise, Rushdie's Chamcha, has married Pamela, not for herself as an individual, but because of her

"voice stinking of Yorkshire pudding and hearts of oak, that hearty, rubicund voice of ye olde dream-England which he so desperately wanted to inhabit."
(The Satanic Verses, p.180)

While this myth has already been destroyed by characters such as Dabydeen's Patel, who informs the narrator that

"Oxford can't give you nothing man .. It's us lot who have given you everything, and don't you forget that. Oxford has only got money, but the Asian community made you rich" (p.231)

the irony of both texts, The Satanic Verses and

The Intended is that the New Right in contemporary Britain is desperately trying to rake these imperial embers by harking back to the good old days when the natives knew their place and Britain was a white man's country.

What does it mean to be 'British' in the last quarter of the twentieth century? Is it possession of a passport or allegiance to a code of conduct? One can be forgiven for thinking that the only real requirement for securing a right to Britishness is the possession of a white skin.

The New Right would argue that shared history is the secret ingredient behind Britishness,[23] but whereas the Asians, and the Afro-Caribbeans, were the colonized and not the colonizers and therefore do not share the 'same' history, one might wonder whether the New Right would include the white working classes in their definition of Britishness. The less privileged people of Britain were deceived into believing that they too had a part in the Empire and its glory, and that they were innately superior to the savages in the colonies. (MacKenzie, 1990:254) It was only in the post-war, post-imperial period, which brought a greater flexibility in class boundaries, that working class Britons could claim a legitimate share in the benefits of their country. In this respect, former Home Secretary, William Whitelaw, reflects on the two-tiered nation that existed prior to World War II, and which placed the English worker on a par with his/her colonial counterparts:

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[23] David Lovibond, in his article "Will this be the death of England?", expresses the general feelings of the New Right on this question:
"Barely a generation ago these islands were occupied by a single people, who despite differences of region, background and expectation were bound by common loyalties and affections, by a shared history and memory. ... England is more than a matter of geography, a neutral or new-found-land belonging to everyone and no one. In this anciently settled country the English people are rooted in the land, they take their traditions from it and from the older races who preceded them there." (13.8.89)

"I'd had a safe and easy life. I'd never seen any members of the working class and therefore didn't like them very much. Then came the war and I saw how these desperately poor and disadvantaged people fought their guts out to save *my* England rather than theirs and I've never forgotten it." (<u>Sunday Times</u>, 28 March 1982; emphasis in original)

The England that was saved did not 'belong' to the lower classes in exactly the same way that the New Right refuses to recognize the claim of the ethnic minorities to 'their' England. The discourse of class has been replaced by the discourse of race and culture, but essentially the discourse of exclusion remains the same: there has to be an easily identifiable helot class. (MacShane, 1992) Despite the fact that skin colour is a conveniently noticeable marker, even more instantly recognizable than accent, the black community and especially the Asians do not readily acccept the status of permanent underclass and, as has been discussed in 6.1., have succeeded in abandoning it by adhering to the basic tenets of the enterprise economy.

The myth of England that deceives Saladin Chamcha and Dabydeen's narrator has also hoodwinked many Britons themselves. Considerable effort has been devoted to creating an image of Britain as an essentially tolerant and freedom-loving country, with traditional history books emphasizing the consolidation of democratic rights together with the great military victories over a

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succession of foreign despots (see 5.2.1.). David Lovibond, writing in <u>The Sunday Telegraph</u>, appears to suggest that this is a recent phenomenon, brought about by people's bewilderment at the occupation of Britain by unassimilable migrants:

"English people have taken refuge in the past. Elizabethan 'theme' parks stand in for history, and television costume dramas provide a gilded remembrance of an older, simpler England." (Lovibond,1989)

However, the cult of the glorious past has always been a pervasive influence in British life in that British people have been constantly reminded of the great deeds and values of former ages. The pageantry surrounding royalty lives on to satisfy "a mass emotional need" (MacKenzie, 1990:257) as well as to fill the gap left vacant by lost imperial power. Looking back to the splendours of the past instead of facing up to the stark realities of the present is to fall prey to the same kind of cultural or patriotic imperialism that has trapped both Rushdie's Saladin Chamcha and Dabydeen's narrator. Starting in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, a consciousness of imperial destiny was drilled into British youngsters, crossing all class boundaries to unite them with a joint purpose, and which was subsequently passed down to succeeding generations up to World War II. (ibid.,249)

Whereas some social historians (e.g. Marwick,1990) see no connection between the resuscitation of imperialism, such as in the wake of the Falklands War of 1982, and genuine national pride, it is extremely difficult to separate the two when the object of this pride is not the England of the late twentieth century, replete with violence and a general moral decay, epitomized by the recent (February 1993) abduction and murder of a two-year-old child by two ten-year-old boys, but rather the myth of a green and pleasant land where class or racial conflicts did not exist because everybody accepted the established hierarchy. Therefore, the work of black writers has contributed to a dismantling, not only of the stereotype image that white people have of black people, but also of the mythical image many British people still cherish of themselves, in spite of decolonization, recession and moral and spiritual decadence.

Atima Srivastava provides a grim picture of the decline in traditional British standards of tolerance and the community spirit. Angie is verbally abused on an underground train by a drunken woman who also threatens her with a broken bottle:

"You weren't born. You were spewed up. Fuckin' cunts. Coming here. You're everywhere. Stinking up the flats. Your fuckin' cars and your shops... " (<u>Transmission</u>, p. 254)

What is more disturbing to the very anglicized young
Indian woman is not the tramp's display of misplaced
racial superiority, but the apathy of her fellow
passengers, who, she concludes,

"didn't give a damn about their own children let alone
some damn paki." (p.258)

The Victorian Age, which coincided with the peak of
the Empire, is regarded by many people as an era of high
standards and strong moral values, especially when
comparisons with present-day sexual permissiveness are
made. In this respect, it should be noted that former
Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher stressed the need to
return to Victorian values as part of her recipe for the
economic recovery of Britain. (Marwick, 1990:383) What is
highly ironic about post-war immigration and in particular
the growth of an Asian community in Britain, is the fact
that the Asians, rather than the British, embody these
Victorian values almost to perfection. The Asians have
understood, better than many indigenous British, the
importance of private initiative and personal freedom.
They have relied on their own resources, avoiding as far
as possible dependency on state aid. The ethnic network
described in 3.5.2. has evidently contributed to the
economic success of many Indians, Pakistanis and

Bangladeshis, but a possible British equivalent, working-class consciousness, which flickered briefly during the miners' strike of 1984, has degenerated into mere class awareness without the group solidarity that goes with it.

Unlike Westerners, Asians do not attach so much importance to the individual, but rather they see themselves as part of a family, and act accordingly. Thus, crucial decisions (such as choice of marriage partners or professions) are rarely taken by family members alone even when they are adults, and grandparents and elderly people are respected because they are old and can benefit others with their experience. Asian families are, therefore, much more close-knit than British families, which are becoming smaller and less cohesive than ever before.

As far as language is concerned, whereas first generation Asian migrants and, in many cases, British-born Asians, tend to speak one or two languages apart from English, many indigenous British people, excluding the Welsh, have difficulties in managing with one. The 'half-English' that is spoken by a large proportion of the population, possibly due to declining school standards, is disquieting and somewhat indicative of the widespread cultural decline of the country. Among members of the New Right there is a misguided notion that official support of

minority languages, such as Gujerati and Urdu, will weaken migrants' need to learn English as the status of the national language will be undermined.[24]   Instead of widening British people's consciousness of the need to know other languages apart from English, this kind of attitude fails to acknowledge the cultural richness that Asians have brought to Britain. If English is at risk in Britain, and this is not such an exaggerated claim as it might seem, it is hardly the fault of Bengali or Hindi speakers.

What cannot be denied is that the Asians have reintroduced God into British society. Religious values rank very highly among Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs and their contribution to the spirituality of their adopted country should not be underestimated. The importance of religion in Asian families has been understood, to a certain extent, in the aftermath of the controversy over The Satanic Verses. While the book burning was dismissed as the reaction of a few fanatics and Islam itself the religion of a backward people, many people in Britain were surprised at the irate response of Muslims to the rubber puppet of Jesus Christ that appeared in the television series Spitting Images. Few Christians seemed to object

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[24] See, for example, Ray Honeyford's article "Too Many Mother Tongues?", The Daily Telegraph, 16.8.89.

to a hippy-style Jesus, but British Muslims, or at least the UK Action Committee for Islamic Affairs, found the puppet of Christ, whom they revere as a prophet, degrading and offensive.(see The Sunday Telegraph, 18.10.92) Whether the puppet was irreverent or innocuous is a matter of one's personal beliefs, but the incident did seem to prove that the atmosphere of indifference which surrounds religion and spiritual values in Britain has been shaken up by the arrival of people with firmer and more solid convictions.

Taken all together: the family, language, religious values, and the self-help work ethic point to, what seem to me to be irrefutable facts, that the Asians are the 'Neo-Victorians', rather than the 'neo-colonizers', that they are the ones who are showing themselves to be more British than the British, and that what used to be the periphery, the Indian subcontinent, has pushed its way to the very core of the former metropolitan centre.

7. Conclusion.

Peter Griffiths, the Conservative candidate who successfully ousted Shadow Foreign Secretary Patrick Gordon-Walker at Smethwick in the General Elections of 1964, was reputed to have won his seat thanks to the slogan: "If you want a Nigger for a neighbour, vote Labour". While not admitting to having used the slogan in his election campaign, Griffiths told the correspondent of The Times that

"I should think that is a manifestation of the popular feeling. I would not condemn anyone who said that. I would say that is how people see the situation in Smethwick. I fully understand the feelings of the people who say it. I would say it is exasperation, not fascism." (9 March 1964)

Certainly the loss of a safe Labour seat in an election that was marked by a national swing to the left of 3.2 per cent (Layton-Henry,1984:43) proved the "tremendous potency" (Saggar, 1992:76) of the immigration issue in Britain and British politics in the period following World War II. Moreover, Griffiths' words suggest that the tolerance of the residents of Smethwick, and by extension of all British people, was being pushed to unbearable limits. Immigration, however, is not a recent phenomenon in Britain, as the nineteenth century saw an influx of Irish men and women fleeing famine and poverty. Many of the problems arising from the Irish presence in nineteenth

century Britain and certainly the hostility that these people provoked would be a foreshadowing of the unfavourable reception afforded the Indians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis and West Indians in the late twentieth century. (Jackson, 1963:62)

The rejection of Irish immigrants was in part due to a feeling of the racial superiority of the Anglo-Saxons. During the nineteenth century, scientific racism reached its zenith with the publication of highly influential studies of racialism by Hunt, Knox and Gobineau, among others. Even after the appearance of Darwin's theories, which demonstrated that man was a single species although he had not descended from a single set of parents, the idea of a hierarchy of races did not disappear, but instead seemed to explain more satisfactorily the existence of primitive peoples, obviously arrested in an earlier phase of evolution, and the enormous progress achieved by the Europeans, especially the British, by far the most evolved race of people on the earth. The fact that the British Empire was expanding in power and size and that the peoples of the colonies of Africa and Asia were clearly no way as advanced technologically as the British offered irrefutable evidence as to the innate superiority of the Anglo-Saxon "race". Furthermore, insistence on the inferiority and backward nature of the

"dark races" justified imperialism, as this was the best way to civilize these benighted people and bring them into the fold of Christianity and the orbit of European influence. While it cannot be denied that there were individual people, missionaries and laymen and women, who fervently believed, not so much in the white man's burden, but in solidarity with fellow human beings, and who sought to enlighten or bring physical relief to Asians and Africans, it seems clear that nineteenth century British imperialists preached the doctrine of racialism, which would be handed down to subsequent generations.

After World War II racialism, that is the belief in the superiority of the white "race", was finally laid to rest, having been scientifically proved to lack any foundation. The division of people into races can no longer be treated as a valid means of classification of the human species. No physical attribute is confined to any single group of humans and even obvious phenotypical differences, such as skin colour, resist clear-cut taxonomies. Thus, the impossibility of defining "race" with any accuracy has made this term obsolete as far as biology is concerned. However, the term lives on in popular parlance and is given official sanction by its

continued use in public discourse, such as news reports, textbooks, novels, television programmes and legislation.

It seems safe to affirm that racialism has no place in present-day society, as human beings have ceased to be regarded in terms of fixed, biological units. The division and ranking of humans according to subjective criteria belongs to the annals of scientific history. Nevertheless, while "race" itself may not be the factor to differentiate groups of people from one another, racial attitudes, and in particular racial antipathies, have survived the demise of the scientific delusion they were originally based on. Furthermore, sociobiologists would argue that certain human behaviours are determined by heredity, which amounts to saying that one's conduct or even culture is inbred and not acquired. Thus, however many years an Indian might reside in Britain, s/he would never be able to become totally British, if by 'British' one means adherence to the culture of the majority. In fact, this 'cultural racism' has come to take over from the biological approach, in order to provide an adequate explanation for the non-Britishness of the post-war migrants and hence to justify people's hostility towards them.

It is tempting to see this cultural racism as an all too convenient label for an ingrained dislike of black

people. The New Right argues that preference for one's

own kind is not confined to whites, as throughout human

history peoples of all "races" have formed tribes to

protect themselves from outside interference. Certainly

when the British ruled India they established themselves

as a racial and cultural elite, untouched, not only by the

lower Indian castes, but by Indian culture and customs

altogether. With notable exceptions,[1] the British made

little attempt to adjust themselves to the new land they

were conquering, taking it for granted that their way of

doing things was infinitely superior. Yet, the failure of

many Asian migrants to adapt to British behaviour is

viewed with contempt and anger.

" 'They should realise they haven't transported a bit of
their village here you know ..."a corner of England that
shall forever be India" ... If they're going to stay here
they'll have to change.'
'You lot didn't when you came to our country'
'That was different. We ruled it.' "
(Randhawa, 1987:24)

If Michael's answer to Kulwant justifies British aloofness

during the Raj, it fails to explain why India's former

rulers have been reluctant to honour their moral, legal

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[1] The first British Governor-General, Warren Hastings,
for all his faults, was committed to the belief that
Indian law and customs should take preference over English
law and that the British should interfere as little as
possible in indigenous affairs. (Spear, 1978:120-123)

and historical obligations towards the people of the
subcontinent in the period following decolonization.

The relationship between the European and the Orient
was a highly ambiguous one. As Edward Said (1991)
describes at length, India attracted the white man and at
the same time repelled him. He was drawn to the passion,
sensuality and mysticism that lay just beneath the
surface, while the frightening otherness and absolute lack
of culturally imposed inhibitions filled him with disgust.
The arrival of white women in British India seemed to
weigh the balance rather heavily onto the negative side.
Englishmen's need to protect 'their' women from the
horrors of unrestrained behaviour forced the memsahibs to
retreat into their private world of exported Englishness.
Consequently, the much criticized Muslim purdah system
found its British equivalent in the civil lines and hill
stations of the Indian subcontinent. Purdah was designed
to protect the purity of the family's blood, because if
the sexes were not kept strictly apart, men would be
overcome by female charms and would indulge in unlawful
sex. Likewise, the enforced isolation of English women
from Indian men, except servants, prevented any
unnecessary pollution of the white 'race' from taking
place. It seems clear that fear of miscegenation lay at

the bottom of British antipathy towards the Indians even before the events of 1857, which merely confirmed what was already common knowledge: that the Indian was savage and immoral and should be treated as such.

Prior to World War II the Asian community was too small to endanger the racial or cultural homogeneity of Britain. Until the nineteen fifties and sixties, Asians were relatively few and far between. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries most of the Asians who lived in Britain had been brought over from the subcontinent to work as servants. Lascars also accounted for a large number of Asians it was possible to encounter in Britain prior to World War I. The majority of Asians ordinary British men and women might have occasion to meet during the imperial era were therefore humble, low-class people. Professional, educated Indians were not completely unknown, but unusual, which reinforced the image, already transmitted through popular fiction, of the Indian as a servile, obsequious, inferior creature. Until the demand for labour in the post-war period, the actual numbers of Asians resident in Britain was too insignificant for anybody to raise the alarm of a possible Hindu or Muslim invasion and the sight of a few turbans neither offended nor enraged anybody.

Numerical superiority was, and still is, a crucial factor in Anglo-Indian relations, as if British culture were too fragile a concept to withstand a massive influx of aliens. In the early part of the twentieth century, when blacks were still a relatively unusual phenomenon in Britain, riots broke out in Liverpool and Cardiff over competition for jobs following demobilization after the first World War. Added to this was a rejection of liaisons between black seamen and white women, which often produced half-caste children, a living symbol of the aberration of crossing racial boundaries. The riots of 1958 were also triggered by a distaste of black/white sexual relationships, which is another of the paradoxes of British responses to post-war immigration. If assimilation is the goal to which all migrants should aspire and yet intermarriage, a sure way of achieving this assimilation, is frowned upon, what course is open to the black?

Colonial attitudes die hard, if indeed they have died at all. The legacy of the Empire has been a persistence in the conviction that there is but one authentic 'British' culture and that it has never been, and should never be, contaminated by inferior cultures, such as the Indian varieties. Among Britain's moral, legal and historical debts to her former colonies referred to

earlier, surely the moral obligation is not only to provide citizens of these countries with jobs and homes, which has been done, but also to acknowledge and welcome the richness of culture that these migrants have brought with them, which has not. The demise of the Empire did not simply mean a reduction in Britain's world power and the relegation of the country to a secondary role in global politics. Decolonization involved the obligation to pay back the debts of the Raj, among which was a reassessment of imperial definitions, of both Asians and Britons alike.

This dissertation has analyzed these definitions and has demonstrated how the proliferation of stereotypes during the two centuries of colonial rule in India affected British people's attitudes towards Asians. The representations of Indians in different discourses, ranging from pure fiction to a less obviously invented kind of narrative, such as historical accounts and press reports have systematically perpetuated the myth of the child-like, devious, uncivilized, licentious, blood-thirsty Asian. It has also examined the gradual racialization of the immigration and nationality laws passed after the second World War, the climax of which was reached in 1968 with the unashamed demagogy of Enoch Powell. Powell, however, should be seen as not the

instigator of racial conflict in Britain, but rather as another spokesman of the racial discourse, initiated in the nineteenth century by men like Knox and Gobineau, kept alive in the early part of this century by Major Evans-Gordon and astutely resorted to by Margaret Thatcher in 1978. The object of the attacks has varied, the Irish and the Jews having been replaced by the blacks, but nineteenth century racialism has been 'modernized' to accommodate a more respectable form of exclusion: a discourse of nationality. Nationality is not defined by the possession of a United Kingdom passport but by a mythical notion of Britishness, based on a shared history, culture and language.

The successive immigration laws show, as far as I am concerned beyond any doubt, that the issue at stake was never one of a geographical impossibility of settling large numbers of people on the island of Great Britain, neither was it an economic one of scarcity of jobs or a possible strain on the social services. The issue was plainly of colour, or culture, as politicians prefer to call it nowadays. One need only recall that, even before the admission of the United Kingdom and Ireland into the European Community in 1973, considerable numbers of Irish migrants were entering Britain to live and work, absolutely free of any bureaucratic hurdles and with the

same rights as British citizens, despite the fact that
they were not members of the Commonwealth and were
definitely not UK passport holders.   Moreover, the post-
war legislation concerning the entry and settlement of,
essentially black, migrants often recalls many of the laws
passed by the British during the Raj. With hindsight, the
Rowlatt Acts, concocted to maintain Indian nationalists in
check after World War I, now appear to be a foreshadowing
of the 1971 Immigration Act, which not only officially
disqualified black, but not white, Commonwealth citizens
from settling in Britain without a work permit, but also
empowered immigration authorities to pursue people,
inevitably black, suspected of having entered the country
illegally. What is revealing about the British people is
the fact that these measures were calmly accepted and
rationalized.   Charles Moore summarized the feelings of,
perhaps not the majority, but undoubtedly a considerable
number of white Britons when he wrote in <u>The Spectator</u>
that

"It is a question of race.   ... We want foreigners, so
long as their foreignness is not overwhelming."
(19 October 1991:7)

The reason why the foreignness of Asians, as opposed to
that of Poles or Albanians, is so overwhelming has its
origin in the stubborn perpetuation of stereotypes in
popular literature, newspapers and, what is possibly a

more insidious form of racial propaganda, school textbooks.

Out of the many conflicts that arose between the Indians and the British during the Raj, the 1857 Uprising and the 1919 Amritsar massacre were ideal events with which to compare and contrast British and Indian reactions and to analyze the degree of myth-making that has resulted as a consequence. While the two events are not perfectly comparable for reasons of duration, it seemed to me that one could draw conclusions about British racial attitudes just by comparing the physical space devoted to these two tragedies in periodicals, novels and history books. The Mutiny was, and still is to a certain extent, a romantic legend of British bravery and guts, determined leadership and tenacity, justice and honour. The fact that it has always been depicted as a 'mutiny' as opposed to a war of independence underlines the basic British assumption that India was 'ours' and that the Indians had no right to protest about or object to being ruled by a superior civilization. As regards Amritsar, the almost total disregard for the unnecessary loss of civilian lives merely proves the extent to which the racial discourse of the previous century had become embedded in the mental framework of decent, law-abiding, Christian people. Although human life was sacred, the deaths of four hundred

Indians, who were not quite human anyway, could be sacrificed to save the Empire. When the papers on the Jallianwala Bagh incident are released, they will provide a valuable insight on the occurrence and will allow further research to be undertaken into the cause and effect of the massacre.

One of the deep-seated fears about immigration from the Indian subcontinent arises from the misconceived notion that the Asians will 'breed like rabbits' and soon outnumber the whites. However many children are born to the Asian community in Britain, it would take many generations, and an absolute halt in white births, for this ever to materialize. What is interesting about this Powellite psychosis is that it betrays a great deal of post-colonial guilt, because if the end of the Empire had really been "a sort of gentlemen's agreement between old pals at the club", as Salman Rushdie describes the Raj ethos still prevalent in contemporary Britain, (1983b:138) the Indians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis resident in Britain would have no cause to harbour any feelings of revenge. If there has been any retaliation on the part of the Asians, it has been by reversing the colonial situation, with Asian businessmen regenerating crippled British industries and providing jobs for white workers.

Nevertheless, the presence of over a million Asians in Britain can indeed be viewed as a kind of colonization in reverse, but from a strictly cultural standpoint. On one hand, in the same way that Indians cannot remove all traces of British presence from their language and their history (Ashcroft, et al., 1989:117-123), Britain and the British cannot underestimate the influence that two hundred years of domination of India exerted on their culture. A rather insular obsession with the purity of 'British' culture is hindering people's acceptance of this influence, which is perhaps more widespread than many people realize. On the other hand, Hanif Kureishi has written that

"It is the British, the white British, who have to learn that being British isn't what it was. Now it is a more complex thing, involving new elements. So there must be a fresh way of seeing Britain and the choices it faces: and a new way of being British after all this time." (1986:38)

Kureishi is talking about the inclusion of blacks in the concept of 'Britishness' but this redefinition also means coming to terms with the philistinism and general moral decay of present-day Britain. The cliché of the polite English gentleman living in a quiet country village has been replaced by one of a uncouth lager lout roaming through deprived inner city streets, but the former image is the one that British people treasure of themselves. In

this respect British Asian writers are contributing to the dismantling of this British myth by describing the reality of their community amidst an unknown England of violence and insolidarity. Thus, one of the many ironies of post-war immigration from the Indian subcontinent that is conveyed through the writing of the British Asian community is summed up by Hanif Kureishi's Haroon Amir in The Buddha of Suburbia. During an interview with some white journalists, Amir lists a number of great British achievements but he concludes that there is something missing,

"You see, miss, there has been no deepening in culture, no accumulation of wisdom, no increase in the way of the spirit. There is a body and mind, you see. Definite. We know that. But there is a soul, too." (1990:264)

History does not repeat itself, but it does sometimes come full circle. The Victorian missionaries tried to take Christianity to the heathen Indians, and the neo-Victorian Asians have brought their spirituality back to their old colonial masters.

Unfortunately, since 1989 some Asian religious beliefs have become an element of difference rather than union. The Satanic Verses, like other works by Asian writers, has helped to bring the Asian reality home to many white people in Britain, although it may be argued that more harm than good has been done to the image of

British Muslims, or Asians in general, by the irate reaction to the fatwa imposed on Salman Rushdie. One of the tragic ironies about Salman Rushdie's novel The Satanic Verses is that many of the people the novel was supposedly addressed to, immigrants in Britain, have bitterly and violently rejected his work. It is also painfully ironic that the discrimination that the novel exposes has been demonstrated by the ethnocentric blasphemy laws that do not acknowledge Islam as a permanent element in British society. While few people would probably deny that Asians are now seen as even more of a threat to the cultural homogeneity of Britain than before the book burnings, at least we have come a long way from the imperial fiction that only served up caricatures of the Indians that the British wanted to see. At least now we can read about real people and not the cardboard cut-outs of the novels of the Raj.

Likewise, the visualization of the Asian experience on television and in films has played an important role in bringing the current reality of Britain home to many people. In some areas of the country white people are not likely to come across many Indians or Pakistanis, which means that they have little idea of what Asians are really like or how they really behave, but they will 'know' all about them from what they have read or heard at school or

in the press. Whereas during the Raj few British people had seen an Indian and consequently had to rely on dubious secondary sources for their knowledge of Indians, in post-imperial Britain first-hand sources are available in a variety of genres. The visual effect has helped to overturn the stereotypes and Asian actors and actresses themselves have made an active contribution to the removal of these images by providing a realistic and sympathetic portrait of Asians in Britain today. (Walters, 1990) Whether the discourse is textual or visual, the message is the same: the Asian community has a voice and an essential character but not for this are they any less British than the white majority. Salman Rushdie argues that something can be gained in translation. (1983a:80) It is for the Asians themselves to decide if they have gained in being borne across the world but as a white Briton I would unhesitatingly respond that Britain and the British have gained in the translation of Indians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis into British citizens. Borrowing the words of Margaret Thatcher, and thinking more about the wrongs and excesses of the Empire than the victory over the Argentinians,

Now that it is all over, things cannot be the same again for we have learned something about ourselves - a lesson which we desperately needed to learn.

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APPENDIX 1

LEGISLATION CONCERNING THE ENTRY AND/OR SETTLEMENT OF
MIGRANTS FROM 1905 TO 1981.

Year	Legislation	Party in Power
1905	Aliens Order	Conservative
1914	Aliens Restriction Act	Liberal
1919	Aliens Restriction (Amendment) Act	Coalition
1920	Aliens Order	Coalition
1925	Special Restrictions (Coloured Alien Seamen) Order	Conservative
1947	Polish Resettlement Act	Labour
1948	British Nationality Act	Labour
1962	Commonwealth Immigrants Act	Conservative
1965	Race Relations Act (following White Paper *Immigration from the Commonwealth*)	Labour
1968	Commonwealth Immigrants Act	Labour
	Race Relations Act	Labour
1969	Immigration Appeals Act	Labour
1971	Immigration Act	Conservative
1976	Race Relations Act	Labour
1981	British Nationality Act	Conservative

APPENDIX 2

Part of Enoch Powell's speech on immigration and the
Government's Race Relations Bill delivered at the annual
meeting of the West Midlands area Conservative political
centre on April 20th 1968, as quoted in The Times 22nd
April 1968.

" .... Like the Roman, I seem to see the river Tiber
foaming with much blood. .. That tragic and intractable
phenomenon which we watch with horror on the other side of
the Atlantic but which there is interwoven with the
history and existence of the states itself, is coming upon
us here by our own volition and our own neglect.
        Indeed, it has all but come in numerical terms, it
will be of American proportions long before the end of the
century. Only resolute and urgent action will avert it
even now.
Whether there will be the public will to demand and obtain
that action, I do not know. All I know is that to see,
and not to speak, would be the greatest betrayal. ...

        In 15 or 20 years, on present trends, there will be
in this country 3,500,000 Commonwealth immigrants and
their descendants. That is not my figure. That is the
official figure given to Parliament by the spokesman of
the Registrar General's office.   There is no comparable
official figure for the year 2000, but it must be in the
region of five to seven million, approximately one-tenth
of the whole population, and approaching that of Greater
London. ...

        The natural and rational first question with a nation
confronted by such a prospect is to ask: 'How can its
dimensions be reduced?' Granted it be not wholly
preventable, can it be limited, bearing in mind that
numbers are of the essence?
        The answers are equally simple and rational: by
stopping or virtually stopping, further inflow, and by
promoting the maximum outflow. Both answers are part of
the official policy of the Conservative Party.
        It almost passes belief that at this moment 20 or 30
additional immigrant children are arriving from overseas

in Wolverhampton alone every week - and that means 15 or 20 additional families of a decade or two hence.

Those whom the gods wish to destroy, they first make mad. We must be mad, literally mad, as a nation to be permitting the annual inflow of some 50,000 dependants, who are for the most part the material of the future growth of the immigrant-descended population. It is like watching a nation busily engaged in heaping up its own funeral pyre.

Let no one suppose that the flow of dependants will automatically tail off. On the contrary, even at the present admission rate of only 5,000 a year by voucher, there is sufficient for a further 25,000 dependants per annum ad infinitum, without taking into account the huge reservoir of existing relations in this country - and I am making no allowance at all for fraudulent entry.

In these circumstances nothing will suffice but that the total inflow for settlement should be reduced at once to negligible proportions and that the necessary legislative and administrative measures be taken without delay.

If all immigration ended tomorrow, the rate of growth of the immigrant and immigrant-descended population would be substantially reduced, but the prospective size of this element in the population would still leave the basic character of the national danger unaffected.

Hence the urgency, of implementing now the second element of the Conservative Party's policy: the encouragement of remigration. ... If such a policy were adopted and pursued with the determination which the gravity of the alternative justifies, the resultant outflow could appreciably alter the prospects for the future.

As Mr. Heath has put it, we will have no first-class citizens and second-class citizens. This does not mean that the immigrant and his descendants should be elevated into a privileged or special class, or that the citizen should be denied his right to discriminate in the management of his own affairs between one fellow-citizen and another, or that he should be subjected to inquisition as to his reasons and motives for behaving in one lawful manner rather than another.

There could be no grosser misconception of the realities than is entertained by those who vociferously demand legislation as they call it 'against discrimination', whether they be leader-writers of the same newspapers which year after year in the 1930s tried to blind this country to the rising peril which confronted it, or archbishops who live in palaces, faring delicately,

with the bedclothes pulled right up over their heads. They have got it exactly and diametrically wrong.

The discrimination and the deprivation, the sense of alarm and of resentment, lies not with the immigrant population but with those among whom they have come and are still coming.

This is why to enact legislation of the kind before Parliament at this moment is to risk throwing a match onto gunpowder. The kindest thing that can be said about those

who propose and support it is that they know not what they do. ...

[White British people] found their wives unable to obtain hospital beds in childbirth, their children unable to obtain school places, their homes and neighbourhoods changed beyond recognition, their plans and prospects for the future defeated.

At work they found that employers hesitated to apply to the immigrant worker the standards of discipline and competence required of the native-born worker. They began to hear, as time went by, more and more voices which told them that they were now the unwanted. On top of this, they now learn that a one-way privilege is to be established by Act of Parliament.

A law which cannot, and is not intended to operate to protect them or redress their grievances, is to be enacted to give the stranger, the disgruntled, and the agent-provocateur the power to pillory them for their private actions. In the hundreds upon hundreds of letters I received when I last spoke on this subject two or three months ago, there was one striking feature which was largely new and which I find ominous.

All members of Parliament are used to the typical anonymous correspondent; but what surprised and alarmed me was the high proportion of ordinary, decent, sensible people, writing a rational and often well-educated letter, who believed that they had to omit their address because it was dangerous to have committed themselves to paper. ...

There are among the Commonwealth immigrants who have come to live here in the last 15 years or so, many thousands whose wish and purpose is to be integrated and whose every thought and endeavour is bent in that direction. But to imagine that such a thing enters the heads of a great and growing majority of immigrants and their descendants is a ludicrous misconception, and a dangerous one to boot.

Now we are seeing the growth of positive forces acting against integration, of vested interests in the preservation and sharpening of racial and religious differences, with a view to the exercise of actual domination, first over fellow-immigrants and then over the rest of the population.

The cloud no bigger than a man's hand, that can so rapidly overcast the sky, has been visible recently in Wolverhampton and has shown signs of spreading quickly. For these dangerous and divisive elements the legislation proposed in the Race Relations Bill is the very pabulum they need to flourish".

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iii. Newspapers and Periodicals.

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