



We're Here Because You Were There

Immigration and the End of Empire

By Ian Sanjay Patel

ISBN 9781839767999 • PB • 352pp • Pub: 2022

Publisher: Verso Books

Original Price: £11.99

Feelbooks Special Edition: Rs. 1195



Chosen as a *BBC History Magazine* **Book of the Year 2021** and shortlisted for the **PEN Hessel-Tiltman Prize 2022**.

"Patel provides an indispensable and urgently relevant account of immigration and the end of empire that reveals the mirage-like quality of the very concepts through which we typically understand postwar Britain. Situating the arrival of nonwhite people in Britain in an intra-imperial context, this bravely and innovatively wide-ranging account shows that neither were they immigrants, nor was Britain ending empire. Their arrival was a phenomenon of continuity rather than a dramatic break with the past. With a compassionate authorial voice, Patel captures the trauma of unbelonging and of racist gatekeeping of the planet against a backdrop of continuous, untrammled British emigration. This carefully researched book is testimony to history's astonishing power to change how we understand the world we inhabit by dispelling the myths that obscure truth."

– **Priya Satia, Raymond A. Spruance Professor of International History at Stanford University**

"A book of rare importance. Ian Sanjay Patel masterfully traces the long shadow cast by Empire over Britain's recent history, and its present." – **Amia Srinivasan, Chichele Professor of Social and Political Theory, All Souls College, Oxford**

"The best possible guide to an essential history." – **Sathnam Sanghera, BBC History Magazine**

How citizens became immigrants: Britain's failure to create a post-imperial nation

What are the origins of the hostile environment against immigrants in the UK? Patel retells Britain's recent history in an often shocking account of state racism that still resonates today.

In a series of post-war immigration laws from 1948 to 1971, arrivals from the Caribbean, Asia and Africa to Britain went from being citizens to being renamed immigrants. In the late 1960s, British officials drew upon an imperial vision of the world to contain what it saw as a vast immigration 'crisis' involving British citizens, passing legislation to block their entry. As a result, British citizenship itself was redefined along racial lines, fatally compromising the Commonwealth and exposing the limits of Britain's influence in world politics. Combining voices of so-called immigrants trying to make a home in Britain and the politicians, diplomats and commentators who were rethinking the nation, Ian Sanjay Patel excavates the reasons why Britain failed to create a post-imperial national identity.

Contents

Part I. We're Here: Immigration and Empire

1. Immigration and the White Man's World
2. Beyond Windrush: A Short History of Post-War Immigration in Britain (1945–1962)
3. A Hostile Isle: Post-War Immigration in Britain (1962–1981)

Part II. You Were There: International Voices

4. The Persistence of Empire
5. Postscripts to Decolonisation

6. Race and Immigration in a Decolonising World

Part III. Here and There: South Asian Migration at the End of Empire

7. Inflating the Threat: The Global Immigration Crisis of 1967
 8. The Kenyan South Asian Crisis: No Entry for British Citizens (1968)
 9. The Ugandan South Asian Crisis: Making British Nationality a Global Responsibility (1972)
- Epilogue • Acknowledgements • Notes • Index

About the Author

Ian Sanjay Patel is currently LSE Fellow in Human Rights at the London School of Economics. His non-fiction writing has appeared in the *New Statesman*, the *London Review of Books*, and elsewhere. He completed his PhD at Queens' College, University of Cambridge.

Feel Books Pvt. Ltd.

4381/4 Ansari Road, Daryaganj, New Delhi 110002

Tel: +91 11 47472600 • Email: orders@feelbooks.in • Website: www.feelbooks.in

DELHI • BENGALURU • MUMBAI • CHENNAI • KOLKATA