

ESSENTIALLY BRITISH?: Exploring citizenship and 'Britishness' using film

I'M BRITISH BUT... (1989)

How does my identity compliment or conflict with others?

How are the immigrants treated when they first arrive?

*My Friend, how will you ever thrive.
In this strange and loveless land,
Where hatred mocks you at every turn,
Where souls are sold as ice,
Where the very soil is contaminated.*

Where have they come from?

*Oh my friend, you came to this England,
Leaving your Punjab.*

Who are the 'foreigners' and what are they accused of?

*In this land your dignity lies torn to shreds,
Even with your pockets full,
You wander the streets like beggars,
Why straddle over an aimless horse,
That gallops on unbridled...*

Why are the immigrants called 'beggars' by the author?

*And you came to England my friend,
Abandoning your Punjab.*

*Recall that it was these same foreigners,
That took their rifles to us –
Innocent, fair flourishing lives,
How they destroyed us.*

Why might the author be worried about them losing their freedom?

*And every corner lies in witness,
O Jallianwalla Bagh.*

*And you, my friend, come to England –
Leaving your Punjab.*

Why did the immigrants come to England?

*Once you brothers fought and hanged,
For the sake of freedom,
Yet will you embrace that same noose now,
And beg yourself for submission.*

*Beware my friend, learn your lesson,
Don't let yourself be marked.*

*Because you came to England to flourish and thrive,
Leaving your Punjab, my friend,
Abandoning your Punjab, dear friend.*



ESSENTIALLY BRITISH?: Exploring citizenship and 'Britishness' using film

I'M BRITISH BUT... (1989)

Reflection Activity

1. From the documentary and the song above, can you identify any reasons for the conflict between the Asian immigrants and the established British citizens?
2. Can you describe any current examples of where there is conflict between people of different cultures living in Britain?
3. Why do you think that there is sometimes conflict between people of different cultures? Can we do anything to prevent it?