

## ABSTRACT

The thesis aims to analyse Sam Selvon's fiction between 1950 and 1990 in relation to the colonial subjects' identity crisis. The thesis will argue that Selvon's fiction is independent of traditional and canonical categories because his representation of colonial subjects is entirely innovative and unprecedented. I will analyse Selvon's novels *A Brighter Sun* (1952), *An Island is a World* (1955), *The Lonely Londoners* (1956), *The Housing Lark* (1965), *Moses Ascending* (1975), and *Moses Migrating* (1983). Each novel sheds light on a different facet of the colonial subject. Nevertheless, colonisation, migration, and identity crisis are common themes for the novels chosen.

From *A Brighter Sun* to *Moses Migrating*, Selvon destroys the caricatured image of the colonised subject. He reaches authenticity on the level of character depiction and through the vernacular, ballad-like narrative. Additionally, the novels represent different aspects of colonisation and migration: "back at home", "the motherland", and "back and forth". I will display how every aspect is fluid and undefinable. *A Brighter Sun* takes place in the West Indies. *An Island is a World* displays "back and forth" experience in the West Indies, USA, and Britain. *The Lonely Londoners*, *The Housing Lark*, and *Moses Ascending* take place in "the motherland". Chronologically the last one, *Moses Migrating*, explores the idea of going back home, which is a very subjective concept. Each novel can be described as a coming-of-age narrative of a man of colour in the colonial structure. However, each journey to self-awareness develops and ends differently. Not only the characters' journeys differ, but also Selvon's journey as a writer differs. The dialect of characters in *A Brighter Sun* takes possession of the entire narrative in *The Lonely Londoners*. The ballad-like structure and vernacular narrative represent the West Indian tradition of storytelling and weaving an identity. Some characters write memoirs, which helps them during the process of building their consciousness. In a way, that makes Selvon's fiction to be about creating fiction and writing one's own self. Considering

Selvon's experiences as a migrant writer, the novels and main characters will be analysed through three different perspectives: identity, politics, and psychology. Homi K. Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* focused on identity, and the question of migration will explain the characters' experiences. Frantz Fanon's focus on the politics and physical side of the clash between individuals will be applied to explain some actions like violence, racism, and social justice in the novels. *Black Skin, White Masks* and *The Wretched of the Earth* take upon these problems caused by constant interaction between the coloniser and the colonised. Lastly, Sartre's ontological and psychological theories will help to understand the colonial subject's identity crisis. Sartre's writing on existence and self in *Being and Nothingness* is crucial for explaining the authenticity and accepting the temporality. It is this authenticity and temporality that make Selvon's fiction contemporary and independent from simple labels.