

WOMEN HAVE NO COLOR: MULTICULTURAL PHILOSOPHIES AND CONFLICTING MULTIETHNIC IDENTITIES IN ZADIE SMITH'S *WHITE TEETH*

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Abstract

This research attempts to explore the real picture of Britain after World War Second. In White Teeth, the novelist shows the cultural conflicts between three different families (the Iqbals, the Jones, and the Chalfens) from different cultural backgrounds. In the novel, Zadie Smith tells the story of the characters' problems and the resolution to those problems while living in contemporary British society. Immigrants cannot find favourable circumstances to prove themselves who they are. The novel attempts to point out the misinterpretation and consequently offers advice to correct the problem of intercultural miscommunication in the west. White Teeth also draws upon the changes in social space in terms of the evolution of a multi-ethnic society. There is a gap in understanding between the different families and also within a family. This research is qualitative in nature. This gap is filled by acknowledging the differences through harmony and mutuality. For this purpose, the theoretical concepts of Chris Barker and Conrad William Watson, Keith Banting, and John Horton are used as theoretical insights for the analysis and explication. The researcher comes to a finding that multicultural philosophies are formed through understanding others to form one's cultural identity. The major finding of this research is that toleration and accommodation are multicultural ethos in contemporary multicultural society.

Keyword: Multiculturalism, Society, Immigrants, Identity,

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*Toleration.***INTRODUCTION**

The novel *White Teeth* (2000) by Zadie Smith presents the real picture of Britain after World War Second. In the novel, the novelist shows the cultural conflicts between three different families (the Iqbals, the Jones, and the Chalfens) from different cultural backgrounds. This research tries to show the reality of multicultural Britain and argues how multiculturalism makes conflicts as well as mutual understanding with each other. Smith, in this book, tries to show the complex and dynamic culture of London and tries to portray the characters with diverse background and their ability to perceive relationships in society. *White Teeth* tells a story of different families, the Jones, the Iqbals, and the Chalfens. Archie Jones is British in origin. He has not properly settled in England. He married Clara Bowden, a black Jamaican woman much younger than him. Such a marriage between a man of British origin and an immigrant black Jamaican creates new cultural practices. They have a daughter named Irie Jones. Samad Iqbal is from Bangladesh who had come to England with his wife Alsana Begum. They have twin sons Magid and Milllat. Samad always desires his family to follow his religion that is Islamic that he finds difficult to maintain in Britain. That is why he sends his son Magid to his homeland Bangladesh. Unfortunately, Magid becomes more English than becoming Islamic. Alsana does not like English as she cannot be away from there. She wants her sons bringing upon their way, wish as they are second-generation immigrants. Millat, Samad's second son, in his teenage, becomes a chain smoker and abuses girls in the school. He is badly treated in Chalfen's house then he realizes the imposition of English value over immigrants. Later he turns to be a radical Muslim. Finally, the Chalfens family is the neighbourhood of the Iqbals and the Jones. This family is a Jewish family that signifies North London. Marcus, Joyce, and their son, Joshua are the representative characters in this family. Both the parents are busy so they do not

have time for Jashua's difficulties. The characters in the novel suffer because they do not find the proper settlement in the migrated land, London in Britain. They struggle to adjust there and towards the end of the novel their understanding helps to reconciliation each other. In this respect, Smith depicts both conflict and acknowledgment through their understanding. Furthermore, she presents multicultural societies to show people from diverse societies and their lifestyles.

White Teeth has been considered as one of the prominent works of Zadie Smith. It has accumulated various criticisms from different perspectives since its publication. Regarding the novel, John Clement Ball argues, "London in *White Teeth* is the setting for the whole story which occasionally ventures to Jamaica, India and Eastern Europe. It is the place where the main characters live and meet. The lives of three families: the Joneses, the Iqbals and Chalfens, evolve and get engaged with one another there" (Ball 2004, p.235). According to him, *White Teeth* is one of the few recent British novels that attempts to represent experiences of more than one generation and place of origin. For him, London provides a meeting place of cultures, religious and political viewpoints and, thus, extends the opportunity of humanitarian understanding towards the characters. The novel describes the relations of white, brown and black, "The personal relations in the novel happen on many levels such as emotional, familial, intellectual and friendly going through divisions of race, culture, and age" (Ball 2004, p.237). This is an example of a city where diversity spreads in different aspects of society. Matt Thomas argues in "Reading 'White Teeth' to Improve Intercultural Communication" highlights the issue of intercultural communication:

"Zadie Smith's novel *White Teeth* has been placed into the multicultural setting of London, England where characters question

their cultural practices and identities. *White Teeth* can be thought of as an allegorical novel since major characters are placed into exaggerated categories of assimilation and creolization. Such a critical framework suggests that the novel does not merely locate the existence of Caribbean themes and theories in the West, but constructs an unintentional critique, saying that cornerstone of Antillean culture has been severely misinterpreted." (Thomas 2009, p.15)

His interpretation of the novel is based on the theme of intercultural communication. The novel attempts to point out the misinterpretation and consequently offers advice to correct the problem of intercultural miscommunication in the west. Being first and second-generation immigrants, there is a difference while perceiving the other's cultural values. Likewise, Irene Perez Fernandez in "Representing Third Spaces, Fluid Identities, and Contested Spaces in Contemporary British Literature" focus on the space as a dimension to shape the characters understanding of the society because London is a city of multi-national and multicultural identities:

"*White Teeth* also draws upon the changes in social space in terms of the evolution of a multi-ethnic society. However, its take on multiculturalism and its treatment of the question of racial differences and the relations established between different racial groups in the city of London. Smith describes immigration and its consequences with certain optimism; the ethnically diverse characters portrayed in *White Teeth* relate to each other in an often funny, sometimes shocking, and naïve way. Smith intends to present a multicultural Britain where ethnic differences are deemed insignificant." (Fernandez 2009, p.153)

Feeling of spatial dislocation becomes the main issue to establish authentic self in migrated land. The space where people belong is an important factor in a multicultural society because spaces in such a setting are an ongoing process of negotiation and change.

Immigrants feel uncomfortable with the new environment with their most immediate community or their family needs to negotiate a different sense of identity within their spatial location. O' Grandy Kathleen states, "*White Teeth* capers through the minefield of origins and the most earnest efforts of those who seek to return to their roots and desperate for the western homogenization, with deep sympathy and understanding" (Kathleen 2000, p.190). As the story includes the experiences of characters from diverse backgrounds, they have their kind of memory of their past. The conflict between the present life and the memory of the past is the reason that results in conflict in the family. The in-between position of the culture creates a dilemma within the family. In *Literature Today*, King Bruce explains, "The themes are generational such as past versus present, assimilation versus resistance, the contrasting direction by the children of immigrants, rational versus New Ageism, the absurdities of liberal and extremists, a final day of destruction and judgment" (Bruce 2001, p.5). Immigrant children do not have a fixed life, they lack clarity. She explores character's identity conflicts before the background of their family history. Cultural origins and prehistory seem to play an important part in an individual's development, chance and personal choice are the important factors to overrule any predetermined life. Another critic Nick Bentley says, "By contemplating the dynamics of 20th century multicultural London and the many changes which have accrued within a postmodern world, Smith's work of fiction appears to be committed to reconsider and reassess a traditional construction of both individual and national identity." (Bentley 2007, p.485)

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To highlight the main characteristics of Multiculturalism.
- To present the real picture of Britain after the World War Second

- To analyze the subjects of identity and culture.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How has Zadie Smith presented the societal and cultural dissimilarities in her novel *White Teeth*?
2. How has Zadie Smith addressed the importance and issues of multiculturalism in the contemporary societies of the world in the selected text?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research presents the real picture of Britain after World War Second. The novel attempts to point out the misinterpretation and consequently offers advice to correct the problem of intercultural miscommunication in the west. *White Teeth* also draws upon the changes in social space in terms of the evolution of a multiethnic society. There is a gap in understanding between the different families and also within a family. This research is qualitative in nature. This gap is filled by acknowledging the differences through harmony and mutuality. For this purpose, the theoretical concepts of Chris Barker and Conrad William Watson, Keith Banting, and John Horton are used as theoretical insights for the analysis and explication. The researcher comes to a finding that multicultural philosophies are formed through understanding others to form one's cultural identity.

TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

White Teeth can be interpreted as a historical novel about the three families. The author parallels between places and generations and recovers interventions in the past which explain the present identity problems of the characters and their involvement with one another. Most of the scholars present multiculturalism as an interdisciplinary

strategy. In the novel, the characters belong to diverse backgrounds so they do have a different point of view. The first migrated family fears that living in a multicultural society might lose their cultural root. They tried to adjust between the different cultures. And at the same time, the second generation is in dilemma. Though many scholars and critics have analyzed this novel, the research analyzes Smith's motive behind raising multicultural issues in the novel. She attempts to problematize the existing multicultural spirit by presenting the characters with multiple voices. She is trying to say that in the name of multiculturalism, existing multicultural ethos is unable to acknowledge and understand the minority cultural values. The minority cultural values are hegemonized by mainstream culture. So the writer here raises the issue that in a multicultural society one should acknowledge the cultural differences. The term multiculturalism is derived from the adjective 'multicultural' in particular as used in phrases multicultural curriculum, multicultural education, and multicultural society. Generally, it refers to the inclusion of people of several races, religions, languages, and traditions. It denotes that a society in which several cultures exist. Similarly, it means the distinctiveness of each culture. Multiculturalism is the combination of diverse cultures in terms of assimilation and integration as well as cultural awareness. It consists of cultural equality as well as inequality whereas inequality is acknowledged. Conrad William Watson states in *Multiculturalism*, "To speak multiculturalism multicultural society than to speak of a society a state, a nation, a country, a religion or even a simply bounded geographical location on such as town or a school-composed of people who belong to different cultures" (Watson 2002, p.1). Generally, culture is a vague and vast term which includes knowledge, language, beliefs, art morals, law, customs, behaviors, other capabilities, and habits acquired by man as a member of society. Culture is not static, it grows out of a systematically encouraged reverence for selected customs and habits. Culture changes with the time being with the rise of colonialism,

immigration, and globalization. Different culture influences the other and gets influenced as well. So, no culture can remain intact and pure.

Multiculturalism is a discipline that represents cultural differences. Within multiculturalism, there are several dimensions in terms of society, politics, economics, and education. Not only have the cultural differences occurred in it rather it covers the distinct circles as in the context of increasing economic and cultural globalization. On the other hand, it leads to the homogenization of ideas, institutions, morals and practices, and forms of life. On the other hand, it encourages heterogeneity. Furthermore, it legitimizes its sense of differences. In multiculturalism through a process of assimilation, people gradually facilitate into a common culture. Chris Barker in *Making Sense of Cultural Studies* writes:

"The idea of a multicultural society has become official policy in many West cultures and presents a liberal democratic attempt to promote ethnic/ racial equality. It is premised on the idea of displaying tolerance towards a range of cultural practices within the contexts of the nation-state. As a policy approach, it has been influential in the education and cultural spheres where it has underpinned attempts to introduce people to a range of different beliefs, values, customs, and cultural practices. For example, the teaching of multi-faith religious education, the performance of rituals, and the promotion of ethnic food became facets of educational policy. As such, multiculturalism aims to express respect for and indeed a celebration of difference." (Barker 2002, p.127)

Multiculturalism as a policy offers a liberal process to promote ethical/ racial equality. It displays the cultural practices in the nation. Its impact on education is an influential practice because of the cultivation of different cultures, values, customs, etc. similarly, the novel illustrates the impact of culture on the characters. By respecting each other's culture, they become multicultural.

However, they feel unease to follow other's cultures due to cultural differences. Culturally people do have different lifestyles and they might be representative of different territories. They have differences in terms of their way of living. However, when they gather at the same place from different corners and they adjust into multiplicity then there lies multicultural society. Similarly, the novel presents the various characters in terms of culture. Through the relationship of the three families, the writer shows the different cultures by which they are closed to each other. Culture matters to bond the relation each other. In the same way in the novel to culture creates strong emotions and relationships as well as misunderstandings. While living in a diverse culture people have to adopt problems caused by the culture itself and at the same time they have to manage for a better environment. Barker states, "Culture is both a name for the domain in which contestation overvalue, meaning and practices takes place and a tool by which to intervene in social life" (Barker 2002, p.69). Culture is a kind of value in the sense that it makes social life easy as well as intervenes in social life.

The novel shows the cultural conflict because people do not have the same belief, values, and ideas in their life. But while they come to know each other, they find shelter in each other. This novel has blended both positive as well as negative qualities in making an understanding. The migrated family Samad and Alasana are hegemonized by the mainstream culture though they highly valued the Islamic norms and values. In contrast younger generations Iire, Millat, and Magid practice the cultural differences and tried to be liberal. They acknowledge the cultural differences and perceive their culture in their way. Watson states:

"The two terms 'multicultural' and 'multiculturalism', which though similar in appearance carry very different associations.

'Multicultural' points to the visible and universally accessible products of cultural diversity- food, clothes, music, theatre, and sometimes specialist occupations- and on the whole, it has very positive resonance: we are all happy to live in multicultural societies which add to the variety and color of lifestyles available to us, increasing the breadth of our choices as consumers. 'Multiculturalism' on the other hand, when it is not simply the noun from multicultural, directs our attention away from these purely visible aspects of diversity to the deeper philosophical and engagement with the world, and how those differences jostle for recognition within national and global boundaries, sometimes in relative harmony with each other, sometimes in a real conflict." (WT 107)

Multiculturalism focuses on the products of cultural diversity. It further emphasizes the political, philosophical implications. Similarly, it combines the differences for recognition. Sometimes it brings real conflict in society. In the novel, characters carry the assumptions and beliefs to present them as who they are.

Irie, in the beginning, wants to be like English but when she knows her mother is from Jamaica, she loves to visit there then she acknowledges the cultural variation. At the end of the novel, she stands as a strong, independent, and self-decisive girl. She decides to give birth to a child whom she does not know whether it is of Millat or Magid. Through the characterization of Magid, Smith critiques the rigidity on root and presents him as a liberal character. He neither fully goes with the root culture nor adopts English culture. So Smith presents him as a representative character of a multicultural society. Similarly, Millat does not find himself in English society. He attempts to go against the Englishness and involve in extremist group KEVIN (Keepers of the Eternal and Victorious Islamic Nation). Smith here, portrays Millat as extremist Islamic as he grows older is an example of one's choice to live in a multicultural society. In the same way, Jousha, a child of Chalfen

family even does not like the way his father's scientific research. He goes against his father and revolts for the preservation of animal rights. In the beginning, the story develops with Archie's marriage to Clara. Though having a long age gap having different racial backgrounds they are happy with each other. Archie does not have any motif to marry a black Jamaican girl. And in the case of Clara as well, marrying an English man is not associated with the acceptance of everything acquired by the English values. Smith describes her "Clara Bowden was beautiful in all senses except maybe, by virtue of being black, the classical. Clara Bowden was magnificently tall, black as ebony and crushed sable, with hair plaited in a horseshoe which pointed up when she felt lucky, down when she didn't" (WT 23). She was independent. After her marriage, she observes Archie as he is not a romantic hero. She seems stronger when she finds Archie's weaknesses. She assumes Archie as "No white knight then, this Archieblad Jones. No aims, no hopes, no ambitions. A man whose greater pleasures were English breakfast and DIY" (WT 48). She feels he has no interest in beauty, youth, and love. She finds him with Samad and asked you never here? Why do you spend so much time with Indians? In such a question, Archie replies "Me and Sam? We go away back (WT 48). Clara might have a misunderstanding about Indians so Archie replies "I've known Sam for years...they are not the royal family; you know they are not those kind of Indians" (WT 54). So the relationship of these two families comes close to understand each other. Smith writes, "Samad and Alsana Iqbal, who were not that kind of Indians as in Arcire's mind, Clara was not that that kind of black, who were, in fact not Indian at all but Bangladeshi, live four blocks down on the wrong side of Willesden High Road" (WT 55). In the novel, Samad desires to listen and understand the various languages like British, Spanish, American, French, and Australian. Smith narrates, "From six in the evening until there in the morning; and then every day was spent asleep until daylight was as rare as a decent tip. For what is the point, Samad would think, pushing aside two mints and receipt to find

fifteen pence, what is the point of tipping a man the same amount you would throw in a fountain to chase a wish?" (WT 55). Samad wants to hide his profession as a waiter and wishes him to know as a scientist, soldier, and student. But at the same time, he feels it is important to be a waiter, to listen when someone says, "Lamd Down sock and rice with chips. Thank you. And fifteen pence clicked on china. Thank you sir. Thank you very much" (WT 58). This time he assumes as an important person to understand other's language and their respect for him. Culture creates the mutual relationship as well as a misunderstanding among people from diverse cultures. In the novel, Clara has different perspectives about the West. But when she comes close to Alsana's family, she finds they are good. In the same way, Alsana also has a negative attitude when she meets Clara for the first time.

After having conversations, she finds the difference. It narrates, "Black people are often friendly, thought Alasana, smiling at Clara, and adding this fact subconsciously to the sort 'pro' side of the pro and consist she had the black girl from every minority she disliked, Alsana liked to single out specimen for spiritual forgiveness" (WT 5). Barker states, "Culture is both a name for the domain in which condensation overvalue meaning and practices takes place and tool by which to intervene in social life" (WT 69). Culture is a kind of value in the sense that it makes social life easy as well as difficult. The characters after understanding the value of culture become social in their life. Samad does not like the education system of the west and hesitates to celebrate the western festival. He says to the teacher, "What is all about this Harvest festival? What is it? Why is it? And why must my children celebrate it?" (WT 129). He thinks it is not their tradition to follow other festivals because it is not in favor of his religion. In such doubt of Iqbal, the headmistress Mrs. Owens replies: Mr. Iqbal, we have been through the matter of religious festivals quite thoroughly in the autumn review. As I am sure you are aware the school already recognizes a great variety of religious and secular events: amongst them, Christmas, Ramdan . . . death of

Martin Luther king. The Harvest Festival is part of the school's ongoing commitment to religious diversity, Mr. Iqbal (WT 129). It is important to know that following the different aspects of society in public spaces does not matter who are you and what is your choice. It is common for everyone and should not be biased. So there must be the recognition of differences. There occurs a problem while acknowledging the difference and adjust in a culturally diverse society. In such a society it is not always the same that you have your own culture and not necessary to follow others. Joseph Trimmer states:

"Culture by contrast is vaunted, celebrated one, still strongly associated emotionally and nostalgically with a distinctive way of life which, despite all its deficiencies speaks directly to an individual's sense of identity and belonging. And precisely because individuals recognize in themselves the emotional charge which this sense of distinctiveness conveys, they are also prepared to recognize the significance and importance of culture in the lives of others." (Trimmer 1992, p.2)

Culture is associated with people's emotions. It makes me nostalgic to the past life while living in a culturally different place. It speaks about people's sense of identity and belonging. Multicultural people have to recognize the significance and importance of culture in their life and others. Particularly, the novel connects an emotion of culture and they come to recognize the importance to each other. Samad fears he and his family will be affected by western culture. He highly respects his religion, Islamism that is why he wants his family also follow the same value. He shares his guilt to his friend Shiva in such a way, "I have been corrupted by England, I see that now- my children, my wife, and they too have been corrupted. I think maybe I have made the wrong friends. Maybe I have been furious. Maybe I have thought intellect more important than faith. And now it seems this final temptation has been put in front of me. To punish me" (WT 144). For him, it is because of the place he and

his family has no good friends. In his mind to follow the Islamic religion is more important than becoming intellectually powerful. He warns his son to go to *Haj* but Magid did not want to do so and said "It is not fair. I cannot go on Haj. I've to go to school. I don't have time to go Macca. It is not fair" (WT 152). The tussle between the father and son is obvious because time and space affect one's mindset. For his son, it is the time to go to school. This shows the conflict between two generations and the tension also is presented differently. Samad has some kind of rivalry due to cultural diversity. He also finds the diversity might hamper his family values. John Horton writes, "Multiculturalism becomes a problem when conflicts between groups about values or their interpretation cannot be comfortably accommodated within a particular social structure" (Horton 2001, p.3). In a multicultural society there exists not only one group. Within various groups there occurs self-degradation, low self-esteem as Samad feels while living in Britain.

DISCUSSION

The traditional notion of multiculturalism, liberalism, or pluralism is in trouble nowadays because there is not always the possibility of celebrating the differences. And at the same time, there would not always be toleration. There is not always assimilation, tolerance between the cultures, rather acquiring the cultural origins which have the potential to overrule any predetermined life path. Millat is aware of the historical facts of colonialism and his cultural heritage. And at the same time, he finds the unequal relationship between immigrants and mainstream culture. To prove that he has changed much while acknowledged his cultural heritage. Smith writes, "The brothers will race toward the future only to find they more and more eloquently express their past... that place where they have just been. Because it is the thing about immigrants ('Fugees, 'emigres, 'travelers): they cannot escape their history any more than you can lose your shadow" (WT 466). Closer to the end of the story Millat decides he is about to change the west perception of minority,

"That's it, that's the long, long history of us and them. That's how it was. But no more" (WT 506). Unfortunately, he chooses violence and decides to kill Dr. Perrel at the Future Mouse conference. Irie feels lost and does not know where she belongs. She feels neither English nor Jamaican. Irie defines Jamaica as, "The land of accidents sound like Paradise" (WT 337). She adopts and idolizes her roots, wanting to return to them in search of self. She also adopts pieces of England for herself that her roots, choosing to define her authentic self in a way that does not always perfectly within her heritage. Her dilemma of what has to accept prevents her to find out the reality of cultural diversity. So she assumes herself as a part of the crowd and even feeling loved by Millat despite being Asian. Looking for an alternative, she turns to her grandmother in hopes of exploring her Jamaican heritage. "I don't want to have a year off, I need one. It's essential- I'm young, I want some experiences. I've lived in this bloody suburb all my life. Everyone's the same here. I want to go and see the people of the world" (WT 378). She learns that her great grandmother, Ambrosia, was seduced by captain Durhan, a white Englishman, during his stay in Jamaica. She also reads extensively about British colonialism and revelations about her heritage make her feel ecstatic. In the end, her grandmother offers her to come to Jamaica. Irie, representing the second generation migrant feels displaced and not belonging, British nor Jamaican. She, as well as many of her second migrants carefully balances between her parents' and society's norms and expectations. Feeling incomplete, Irie looks for her root and tries to figure out her own identity. When she becomes pregnant she realizes there is nothing to the root where one belongs to. It is something to acquire to adapt to the situation. It is written:

"Irie's child can never be mapped exactly nor spoken of with any certainty. Some secrets are permanent. In a vision, Irie has seen a time, a time not far from now, when roots won't matter anymore because they're too long and they're too tortuous and they're just

buried too damn deep. She looks forward to it." (WT 527)

She is confident that whomever the father of her unborn child she would claim it is a child from the imaginary land. It further narrates, "At first this fact seemed ineffably sad to Irie; instinctively she sentimentalized the biological facts, adding her invalid syllogism: if it was not somebody's child? That is now her child seemed . . . A map of the imaginary fatherland" (WT 516).

FINDINGS

The novel presents the intergenerational conflicts, intercultural conflicts, radical religious conflicts, and biogenetical engineering conflicts of contemporary British society. Despite its numerous discourses; race, ethnicity, nationality, and class et.al. Smith highlights the issue of forming an authentic self in a multicultural society where they could have the choice to live as they are. Second-generation children are more conscious about how to figure out in a multicultural society. Banting and Kymlica write:

"...even as the state seeks to curtail the perceive 'excess' of multiculturalism, they assimilations models of immigration, and accept the need for a public institution like the schools, media, health care, and police to adopt to deal better with the realities of ethnic diversity. Immigrant groups are no longer expected to hide their ethnic identity in public life and can expect reasonable forms of recognition and accommodation in a public institution. (Banting and Kymlica 2006, p.8)

According to the immigrants are not always homogenized and assimilate the older values in a multicultural society. The views, "As with national minorities and indigenous people, a baseline level of 'recognition' and 'accommodation' for immigrants has increasingly been accepted as an inevitable and legitimate aspect of life in liberal democracy" (Banting and Kymlica 2006, p.89). In contemporary British society, the immigrant group has the freedom to their choices

and their recognition is acceptable. Smith's characters mirror England's changing social environment, which especially after decolonization, has become increasingly multiethnic and multicultural.

Along with the critical argument about Smith's multicultural novel, the author herself recognizes the limitations of multiculturalism. Smith confesses, "That the whole kind of the 60s, 70s, liberation ethnic that you will be released by knowing your roots, that you will discover yourself. I just always thought was a crock basically and it's partly true, but your roots come with baggage. And the baggage is not always fun" (interview). Smith admits the underlying motive behind her work is that rootedness remains independent for place and often, if not always subjectively drives people. Rootedness does not, however, necessarily assist in the search for the authentic self unless it is interpreted to do so. About the theme of the "white teeth" in the novel, teeth are referenced in many chapter title of the novel (Teething Trouble, Molars, and Canines: The Ripping Teeth) and also appears in as references as cultural markers within the text. Smith illustrates "teeth" as a symbol of wisdom and as an identity of a family. As Mr. Hamilton clarifies to Millat and Magid, "While you're still young, the important matter is the third morals. They are the more commonly referred to the wisdom teeth . . . because they're your father's teeth, you see, wisdom teeth are passed down by the father" (WT 173). So here, teeth are the transformation of one generation to another generations. So, "teeth" in the novel are markers of the history, genealogy and also the individual journey through their lives. Smith also highlights the fact that having white teeth in modern society also refers to fakeness. Hamilton in the novel further tells, "Clean white teeth are not always wise, now are they?" (WT 171). It is because whites and blacks are not equally treated in multicultural Britain though having white teeth on both races. While living in a multicultural society, there is an impossibility of purity in a conventional sense. The ideal

multicultural society lies somewhere in the future where robots are not suppressed, but where they simply do not matter anymore. It is only in this society, where one does not truly know or does not care who one it came from and why one is here, that acquires the freedom to be and live. The characters of the novel identify their authentic self through the mingling of the past and present, a rootedness that clings to both personal histories and present circumstances.

In fact, in *White Teeth* characters of different cultures, races and ethnicities have encountered each other because they want cultural harmony that would not discriminate against each other. Smith further illustrates the understanding each other's culture well. The characters in one or another way struggle to adjust to each other's culture. To bring the closeness between the characters, the writer reconciles through understanding. Even though Smith's characters have difficulties in negotiating the different components of their lives, as a consequence of their inability to accept ambivalence, negotiation seems to be of fundamental importance within the world in which they live. The contact between roots and routes necessarily requires negotiation to shape identity and to interact with others. Therefore, a negotiation appears to be essential when dealing with the issue of identity formation and consequently also with one's relationship with others. To sum up, the novel *White Teeth* is a mixture of English, Asian and Jamaican languages. There is a mixture of genres, a mixture of reality and fantasy is the essence of multiculturalism of Zadie Smith's novel. Smith also presents the complexities and dark side of a multicultural society and tries to find the resolution to have a better life. Many critical evaluations proved that the novel has tended to center on its multicultural appeal to the aesthetic of difference and the politics of authentic self.

CONCLUSION

This is a novel written in the shadow of the post-war period of Britain where immigrants from different countries make new cultural practices. Smith shifts the focus from the hegemony of whites that cannot give space to practice the other's original cultural values. That is why she gives equal values to all cultures that existed in the multicultural society. Smith's use of multicultural ethos as a liberating strategy enables her to reinterpret Britain's multicultural construction and at the same time, she can present the cultural, historical, and geographical contexts to a border interrogation of the human relationship. She succeeds in achieving a vision of the construction of plural and multicultural society. Smith's views are close to the unity in diversity. In this way, Smith's novel presents the immigrants in Britain. She criticizes the earlier notion of multiculturalism, which is supposed to celebrate liberalism and equality. In the name of liberation and equal opportunity to the immigrants, they were hegemonized by the whites. They have to follow the cultural values of whites so that they would be civilized. However, Smith in the novel portrays the real experience of immigrants and tries to give justice to them. She attempts to raise minorities' cultural values and give them space to develop their lives as who they are. There is a conflict while finding the differences among various cultures. The conflict comes to form consciousness in the characters especially immigrants' children. The research shows how Smith's *White Teeth* celebrates cultural tolerance and humanitarian values among characters.

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