



**HYBRIDITY IN ZADIE SMITH'S *WHITE TEETH*
AND HANIF KUREISHI'S *THE BUDDHA OF
SUBURBIA*: A POSTCOLONIAL STUDY**

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THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that in my opinion, the thesis submitted by Mohammed AL-ABBASI titled “HYBRIDITY IN ZADIE SMITH’S *WHITE TEETH* AND HANIF KUREISHI’S *THE BUDDHA OF SUBURBIA*: A POSTCOLONIAL STUDY” is fully adequate in scope and quality as a thesis for the degree of Master.

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This thesis is accepted by the examining committee with a unanimous vote in the Department of English Language and Literature as a Master thesis. 18/02/2025

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own work, and all information included has been obtained and expounded in accordance with the academic rules and ethical policy specified by the institute. Besides, I declare that all the statements, results, and materials, not original to this thesis have been cited and referenced literally.

Without being bound by a particular time, I accept all moral and legal consequences of any detection contrary to the aforementioned statement.

Name Surname: Mohammed AL-ABBASI

Signature:

FOREWORD

I always thank Allah, who guided me and made me one of the distinguished ones by choosing Karabük University, and I thank Allah for the best supervisor, I would like to thank Dr. Mustafa CANLI from the bottom of my heart for his help and guidance in writing and completing my thesis in a wonderful way. I would also like to thank the head of the Department of English Language and Literature at Karabük University, Prof. Dr. Serdar ÖZTÜRK, for his scientific assistance and support. I hat off to Dr. Harith Turki, who helped me and always gave me wisdom and motivation.

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ABSTRACT

The current study undertakes an examination of hybridity within the realm of postcolonial studies, with particular emphasis on Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* and Hanif Kureishi's *The Buddha of Suburbia*. This thesis employs a comparative methodology to analyze the manner in which both authors address themes of identity, and multiculturalism. Through a comprehensive analysis of the intricate interconnections among cultural heritage, historical influences, and individual experiences, this study elucidates how these novels depict the negotiation of composite identities within a contemporary British framework. At the core of this research lies an analysis of the protagonists' challenges related to their sense of belonging and self-identity within varied cultural contexts. The characters in both novels embody the conflicts between their ancestral heritage and the sociopolitical forces of contemporary Britain. The thesis posits that both authors adeptly demonstrate the fluidity of cultural identities, thereby contesting conventional conceptions of Britishness and highlighting the transformative essence of hybridity in 1970s London. Through meticulous analysis of texts, the thesis elucidates the persistent themes of belonging, racial prejudice, and the quest for personal and cultural coherence. It posits that hybridity, as illustrated in these novels, surpasses mundane coexistence, transforming into a fluid method of identity reconstruction. The thesis culminates by affirming that both Smith and Kureishi make substantial contributions to the discourse surrounding multiculturalism in British literature, offering profound insights into the fluid and frequently contradictory essence of hybrid identities within a postcolonial framework.

Keywords: Hybridity; Postcolonial study; Multiculturalism; *White Teeth*; *The Buddha of Suburbia*

ÖZ

Bu çalışma, Zadie Smith'in *White Teeth* ve Hanif Kureishi'nin *The Buddha of Suburbia* adlı eserlerini temel alarak postkolonyal çalışmalar alanında melezlik konusunu incelemektedir. Tez, her iki yazarın kimlik ve çokkültürlülük temalarını ele alış biçimlerini analiz etmek için karşılaştırmalı bir metodoloji kullanmaktadır. Kültürel miras, tarihsel etkiler ve bireysel deneyimler arasındaki karmaşık bağlantıların kapsamlı bir analizi yoluyla, bu romanların çağdaş İngiliz romanı çerçevesi içinde bileşik kimliklerin nasıl tasvir ettiğini açıklamaktadır. Araştırmanın özünde, kahramanların çeşitli kültürel bağlamlar içinde aidiyet ve öz kimlik duygularıyla ilgili yaşadıkları zorlukların analizi yatmaktadır. Her iki romandaki karakterler, atalarının mirası ile çağdaş Britanya'nın sosyopolitik güçleri arasındaki çatışmaları somutlaştırmaktadır. Her iki yazarın da kültürel kimliklerin akışkanlığını ustalıkla gösterdiğini, böylece geleneksel Britanyalılık anlayışlarına karşı çıktığını ve 1970'lerin Londra'sında melezliğin dönüştürücü özelliğini vurguladığını ileri sürmektedir. Metinlerin analizi sayesinde tez, aidiyet, ırksal önyargı ve kişisel ve kültürel tutarlılık arayışı gibi kalıcı temaları aydınlatmaktadır. Bu romanlarda resmedildiği şekliyle melezliğin, sıradan bir arada yaşamayı aşarak, kimliğin yeniden inşası için bir yönteme dönüştüğü görülmektedir. Tez hem Smith hem de Kureishi'nin İngiliz edebiyatındaki çokkültürlülük söylemine önemli katkılarda bulunduklarını ve postkolonyal bir çerçevede melez kimliklerin akışkan ve sıklıkla çelişkili özüne dair derin içgörüler sunduklarını teyit ederek sonuçlanmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Melezlik; Postkolonyal; Çok Kültürlülük; *White Teeth*, *The Buddha of Suburbia*

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ABBREVIATIONS

WWII/I: First/ Second World War

UK : United Kingdom

Etc : Et cetera



SUBJECT OF THE RESEARCH

The thesis examines cultural hybridity in postmodern British literature, focusing on Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* and Hanif Kureishi's *The Buddha of Suburbia*. It investigates how these novels depict first- and second-generation immigrants' issues with identity, belonging, and colonial legacies in postwar multicultural London.

PURPOSE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH

The purpose of this thesis is to examine cultural hybridity in Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* and Hanif Kureishi's *The Buddha of Suburbia*. It looks at themes like identity, migration, and postcolonialism to study how mixed identities change in multicultural Britain. This helps readers better understand the complexities of cultural interactions and blend in with today's writing.

METHOD OF THE RESEARCH

The study in Cultural Hybridity in Postmodern British Literature explores how the books *White Teeth* by Zadie Smith and *The Buddha of Suburbia* by Hanif Kureishi show cultural hybridity through their characters' experiences. It looks at the behaviors influenced by migration, identity, and differences between generations, linking these to Britain's history and its ethnic issues. Both books show mixed identities as places for discussion and change, showing how postcolonial theory and real-life experiences impact writing.

THE HYPOTHESIS OF THE RESEARCH/ RESEARCH PROBLEM

White Teeth by Zadie Smith and *The Buddha of Suburbia* by Hanif Kureishi are examples of postmodern British fiction that deal with cultural hybridity and issues of identity. The intricacies of cultural belonging and social adaptability are brought to light by this study, which uses postcolonial theory to examine characters' encounters with migration, diversity, and the negotiating of identity.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Concepts of Cultural Hybridity

Cultural hybridity in literature offers significant work in postcolonial contexts in the 1970s and early 1980s, marking the beginnings of the new world of multiculturalism and cultural hybridity in Britain. My thesis will focus on how contemporary British multicultural literature illustrates the various strategies employed by working-class immigrants in the colonies to endure a hostile environment, especially since a growing number of colonial migrants established themselves and started families in Britain, altering the very definition of “Britishness.” Also, advances in transportation technology have facilitated communication on a previously unthinkable scale, allowing people to migrate. Initially, traumatized immigrants concentrated on remaining within limited social circles; however, their resilience established a foundation for subsequent generations to cultivate increasingly sophisticated methods of negotiating British identity. Smith and Kureishi, well-known figures in modern British literature, have handled this historical event quite sensitively. Their hybrid and identity-focused works highlight the transient nature of cultural borders and question long-held ideas about what it means to be British.

The power structure in Britain is founded on racial inequality, the very foundation of its self-proclaimed cultural dominance rests on the systematic oppression of people of color. The idea that white people are inherently better than all other races became deeply ingrained throughout the process of colonization. This study also seeks to analyze the phenomena of multiculturalism in Britain during the latter part of the nineteenth century, drawing on the characters and scenarios from both novels. The thesis centers on identification, belonging, non-belonging, and the distinctions between first- and second-generation immigrants since the latter tend to exhibit more hybridity via societal adaptation, genetic factors like in Karim’s character English mother and an Indian father and Irie character English father and Jamaican mother, which refer to the same situations of authors. As Elaine Helman argues, “Kureishi and Smith are second-generation immigrants born and live in London and identify with their British and ancestral histories. These authors have first-hand experiences with racism, displacement, and belonging and recount them in their writing” (Helman, 2014, p. 6).

London has emerged in recent decades among the world's most ethnically varied populations, adding to the city's long history of multiculturalism. Therefore, both novels take place in and around London and its suburbs, and the protagonists' varied perspectives on the veneration of the past and actual historical events give each setting its unique flavor. This stresses the importance of history in these works while also demonstrating how history is fragile, influenced by many individuals and locations, and necessitating reconstruction on both an individual and national scale. Thus, *White Teeth* and *The Buddha of Suburbia* teach us that no matter how much the protagonists wish they were, no location is ever neutral and free of history.

In *White Teeth*, Smith shows the intricate lives of three interrelated families living in London from 1975 to 1999, illuminating the generational and cultural divides that influence their identities. Through the characters of Millat Iqbal and Irie Jones, Smith clarifies the complexities second-generation immigrants face as they navigate the interplay between their ancestral heritage and the modern contemporary British realities. The novel engages with complex themes of non/belonging, heritage, and the persistent impact of colonial legacies. As the story progresses, the author discusses dualistic views of identity, portraying hybridity as a state of discord and a realm for dialogue and development. According to Ku Chaturvedi and Deepika Dhand Smith's unique take on these topics and way of presenting them both enrich the current conversation about postcolonialism and establish her as a major player in the literary world. Furthermore, her intricate depiction of the intricacies of cultural dislocation and the quest for identity appeals to many readers, regardless of their location or cultural background (Chaturvedi & Dhand, 2024, p. 1795). On the other hand, in *The Buddha of Suburbia*, Kureishi presents a profound screening of hybrid identity as seen through the experiences of protagonist Karim Amir, a young man of diverse heritage. Situated in 1970s Britain, the novel chronicles Karim's self-exploration as he traverses the complex intersections of race, class, and sexuality. Kureishi's story interrogates singular conceptions of identity, illustrating hybridity as an evolving and complex phenomenon. Through Karim's experiences, the novel critically explores the societal constructs of Britishness, illuminating how cultural hybridity challenges and reconfigures established power activities.

What makes the two works distinct is how they portray the journey of self-discovery. When thinking about how hybrid and cultural identities emerge, *White Teeth*

considers the significance of history and the past. At the same time, *The Buddha of Suburbia* follows a character's maturation toward a future-focused, modern-day identity. One way to look at the protagonists of Irie and Karim is hybrids; they have mixed ancestry, and the two books explore what it is like to grow up in a multicultural environment. Irie and Karim face a difficult balancing act between their own cultural, historical, and identity concepts and the English government's view of them as hybrid persons. However, according to Stuart Hall's theory, the novels' narratives extend beyond Karim and Irie's journeys, engaging with Britain's evolution into a multicultural society and presenting cultural identity as a fluid and dynamic construct rather than a fixed entity.

This thesis is organized into four chapters; the first chapter delineates the theoretical framework, utilizing post-colonial theory to elucidate essential concepts, notably hybridity, which represents the amalgamation of cultures resulting from colonial interactions and subsequent global migrations, a fundamental aspect of postcolonial studies. Homi Bhabha's hybridity theory proposes an "in-between" space where cultural identities converge, negotiate, and transform, challenging the colonizer and the colonized strict binaries. Homi Bhabha asserts that the "Third Space" transcends mere conflict; it is a locus of resistance, invention, and new identities. Stuart Hall posits that individual identities are dynamic and continually evolve via interactions with many cultures and histories, facilitating the development of new identity constructions. At the end of the chapter, migration refers to serves as a pivotal element in both historical contexts and modern-day discussions the migration of South Asians to Britain, especially following World War II.

In the second and third chapters, the literary perspectives refer to migration, hybridity, and identity as a critique of the cultural and social hierarchy in the City of London as multicultural and the generational tensions within immigrant families. There is prejudice and discrimination between the colors that immigrant communities suffer in both *The Buddha of Suburbs* and *White Teeth*. Through irony, Smith and Kureishi argue for a more complex view of diversity and reject essentialist ideas about culture and identity, highlighting the adherence to customs and traditions of the first generation of immigrants. In contrast, the second generation will not belong to either culture. The last chapter presents a comparative study of the two novels. This analysis highlights the similarities and differences between the two works regarding their approaches to cultural

hybridity. In addition, this thesis shows how personal, and group identities interact by putting their stories in Britain's larger political and cultural settings after World War II. Finally, the thesis aims to focus on the continuous work on multiculturalism and hybrid identity in postcolonial literature and how these human experiences of each of the protagonists of the two novels seek to shape their current fate with their families and British society through interaction, coexistence, and adaptation, and in the end, the protagonists did not reach the result of belonging to a specific culture.

As a result of people's disappointment after World War II, absurdist fiction started appearing in the 1950s and 1960s, mostly in Germany and France. This period is when postmodern writing and all that it means were created. Postmodern literature is a broad term for writing after World War II and continues to flourish today. Using realistic characters, references to current events, and messages about money and society, postmodern writing shows how people feel about political and societal issues. Nick Bentley also argues that throughout every literary era, we usually find a group of authors who actively participate in the prevailing literary practices of that time. The authors in question range from those who consider themselves just traditionalists to those who regard themselves as at once radical innovators and traditionalists. Contemporary British novels' formal features are heavily influenced by literary form arguments that emerged in the 1950s and 1960s. A significant portion of postmodernist literature seeks to challenge the assertions of realism fiction, using various narrative approaches to achieve the importance of these goals. These techniques encompass metafiction, the interruption of linear narrative progression and the correlation between cause and effect; questioning the author's authority; integrating important historical events that refer to previous with subsequent events and characters; self-reflexively highlighting the language employed in constructing the fiction; the utilization of parody and pastiche; and a broader skepticism towards established ideologies and philosophies that came from greatest fields of life (Bentley, 2008, pp. 30-34).

Postcolonial theory is a literary framework that examines literature produced in nations that were once or still colonies of other countries. It may also address literature authored by individuals from colonial nations like Britain that focuses on colonies or their inhabitants. Moreover, Nick Bentley states that in terms of Britain's role in the post-World War II global order and the evolution of its domestic population, colonialism's legacy ranks among the most far-reaching impacts on the former colonies

and the United Kingdom. The term “postcolonialism” was developed to describe this new reality, and several ideas and discourses have emerged across disciplines to analyze and evaluate the effects of this massive change in global political structure. With the formation of the Commonwealth, an alliance of several nations formerly under British dominion, Britain has maintained ties with numerous former colonies (p. 17). This ongoing connection has also impacted migratory patterns and has been a notable aspect of Britain’s population demography in the years after WWII.

It emphasizes how literature from the colonizing subculture regularly misrepresents the reviews and realities of the colonized, reinforcing their perceived inferiority. Meanwhile, literature uses the colonized sought to make their identification explicit and reclaim their history, even as those records remain marked by an experience of otherness. As Robert Young confirms that neither a subject of study nor a theory has or has not ended, postcolonialism encompasses much more. Its goals have always included a far-reaching political ambition to reshape the world from the ground up by remaking Western knowledge systems, reorienting ethical standards, and inverting global power relations. Examining the interconnected histories of violence, dominance, inequality, and injustice, as well as the causes behind the fact that millions of people worldwide continue to lack access to necessities that the majority of Westerners take for granted, have always been central to the postcolonial movement (Young, 2012, p. 20). In the following sections, I will tweet about the two influential theorists, Homi Bhabha and Stuart Hall. Their varied contributions help address the idea in its cultural context.

I would focus on Homi Bhabha concepts first, postcolonial studies have been greatly influenced by the idea of hybridity, established by scholar and critical theorist Bhabha, and how the relationships constituting hybrid identity take place, relying almost primarily on cultural mixing. Bhabha first used the concept of hybridity to highlight the tensions in colonial discourse. Later, it was expanded to cover the diverse range of signals seen in contemporary life and the different approaches to living with differences during and after the war.

According to Marwan Kraidy, the influential postcolonial thinker Bhabha has created a theoretical framework emphasizing how cultures overlap and how hybrid identities are created. In the framework of colonialism and postcolonialism, his notion of hybridity first appears when cultural exchanges, negotiations, and transformations

occur. In Bhabha's view, hybridity undermines binary oppositions and upends established concepts of identity by accepting the liminal areas in between. These hybrid settings provide opportunities for resistance, cultural adaptation, and the development of fresh identities and modes of expression (Kraidy, 2006, pp. 65-75). The Third Space, according to Homi Bhabha, is where colonial relationships take place since neither the colonizer nor the colonized have total control over the other; if there were, there would be no connection at all. If both sides abide by the colonial rule, which is logically suggested and practically occurs in real life between the colonizer and the colonized, the colonial relationship will persist (Bhabha, 1994, p. 46). In an accurate description of the boundaries that have become completely blurred, the idea of cultural hybridization has merged between different artistic spaces. For this reason, the fields have become intertwined instead of private and public. Bhabha also mentioned the word "unhomely," which refers to an experience that reflects the multi-faceted nature of hybrid identities through the complex nature in which individuals constantly negotiate for their status and influence by the other culture (p.14). Focusing on cultural integration rather than separation, this hybridity breaks the obvious boundary between private and public settings.

Ironically, cultural pressure on colonial individuals led to changes in Indian identity, resulting in a hybrid stance combining features of both native and colonizer cultures. This predicament was used as a resistance tactic against the Empire in postcolonial periods via writing. Many colonial authors use "imitating" the English language to criticize features of "imperial" culture. As David Herman et al. mentioned, "a more dynamic reading of hybridity in terms of Bhabha's concept of mimicry, the two cultural identities tend to adopt features one of the other" (Herman et al., 2010, p. 228). India is an example of how colonialism contributed to the emergence of several identities. Furthermore, many individuals migrated from colonial nations to countries where they could dwell securely because of colonialism and exploitation, as in Samid's family in *White Teeth* by Zadie Smith and Haroon's family in *The Buddha of Suburbia* by Hanif Kureishi. As Bahareh Bahmanpour states:

It is possible though, that in the next generations to come and through the continuous process of assimilation, some diasporas melt into the mainstream culture and gradually disappear as a distinct community through time. This process, however, is a

very long-lasting slow-moving one and the first and even the second generation of immigrants. (Bahmanpour, 2010, p. 45)

Immigrant generations keep deeper links to their cultural history, although following generations frequently completely integrate into mainstream society. However, total assimilation is not uniform nor unavoidable; cultural preservation takes several forms, impacted by variables such as community networks and structural impediments.

Bhabha's idea in post-colonialism is that hybrid spaces are the mixing of cultures. Ultimately, Bhabha believes that hybridization symbolizes victory over the dominant, or part of it. Bhabha said that the stories of colonial authority and dominating cultures are undermined by hybridity. The act of previously excluded topics being included in mainstream discourse deconstructs the system of inclusions and exclusions that form the basis of a dominant culture. The linguistic and ethnic distinctions of the native self-taint the dominant culture. Homi Bhabha argues that a partial culture is the tainted but interconnected tissue of several cultures; it is both the limit and the impossibility of a culture's containment. It is perplexingly similar and distinct like the "in-between" space between cultures. If we are to advocate for the "unhomely," transient, partial character of culture. By doing so, we bring a new dimension to the liberal-liberationist divide: the idea that assimilating or agonistically translating cultures is a multi-faceted process that gives rise to borderline emotions and identifications, different kinds of cultural empathy and conflict (Bhabha, 2013, p. 54). Also, not only does hybridity show how cultural authority is permeable and variable, but it also undermines cultural binaries.

One aspect of cultures is how they express socioeconomic divides and uneven development. These things disrupt the national culture's self-recognition, its anointed frontiers of territory and heritage. Minority voices in the multicultural debates, both pro and con, provide a social topic built by cultural blending, the exaggeration of group or community distinctions, and the expression of perplexing similarities and mundane contrasts. Liberals' steadfast dedication to portraying cultural variety as these precarious compromises of cultural difference often undermines multiple choice. Liberal multiculturalism discourses feel the tremors of revision as they try to hold on to their tolerant ideas. They run against the boundary of their deeply held belief in "equal

respect” when they try to accommodate the multicultural demand. Also, he highlights those eliminating binaries and destabilizing power is the goal of hybridity, and Bhabha confirmed this idea. The hybrid approach or discourse creates a negotiating environment with uneven power, but its language might be ambiguous. Talking like this isn’t integration or collaboration. It paves the way for the emergence of a non-binary “interstitial” agency that challenges traditional depictions of social conflict. A dialectic that does not place a premium on cultural supremacy or sovereignty is where hybrid agencies find their footing (p. 58). They use their cultural background to create images of community and historical memory that reflect their minority status as the outsiders inside the total.

Building in this hybridity, which Homi Bhabha sees as probably heretical, becomes a supply of creative energy. To mission the purity of cultural limitations is to dream of the latest opportunities, just because the migrant goal is to survive in unusual spaces. This hybridity creates an “in-between” area, empowering individuals to navigate and redefine their identities. Cultural translation, then, now not most effective bridges different cultures but also fosters a sense of enterprise for those navigating hybrid identities (1994, pp. 226-227). Also, what this mixed-race speech representing people who have left the Indian subcontinent for the West could imply for Western civilization is something that worries Bhabha. The migrant may either stay the same or become an integral part of the new culture; he lays the groundwork for both possibilities.

Bhabha’s idea of the concept of negotiation differed from Edward Said’s book *Orientalism*, which was written in 1979. Bhabha’s idea of the concept of hybridity is considered a quick starting point, while Said maintains that the colonizer alone has all colonial power and discourse, Bhabha highlights the mutuality and negotiations that occur across the colonial gap. Said changed his opinion from believing that there was an impenetrable divide between the West and the East to endorsing communication and exchanges between the two extremes. He claims that all cultures are interconnected, that none are distinct from one another, and that all are diverse, hybrid, remarkably varied, and not monolithic (Tahsildar, 2013, p. 33. Cited from Said, 1994, p. xxv). While both Bhabha and Said challenge cultural superiority in their own unique ways, Bhabha’s hybridity broadens the discussion and highlights the ambiguity and transformational power of cross-cultural contacts.

The idea of hybridity is central to understanding how societies mix and change, especially during times of invasion, according to postcolonial theory. It is not accurate to think of the colonizer and the colonized as two separate groups. Instead, hybridity shows how they affect each other and create new, mixed forms of identity. This way goes against the idea that cultures are “pure” and awesome by showing that identity is formed through complicated interactions. In her work on hybridity, Homi Bhabha stresses that cultural identity happens in a place of conflict, where things that are normally separate come together and change. By accepting this place, we can move beyond simple ideas of cultural difference and see how everything is linked and how new kinds of identities are possible. According to Abdullahi Uma and Nuhu Lawan state that a highly debated and often used concept in postcolonial theory, hybridity is frequently understood as the emergence of novel intercultural encounters within the contact zone established by colonialism. In gardening, “colonization” is creating a new species by crossing or grafting two species together. Politics, culture, language, race, and many other aspects of human life undergo hybridization (Umar & Lawan, 2024, p. 16). Hybridity in gardening entails the combination of different species to create new varieties, paralleling the cultural integrations observed in human societies. An exclusive emphasis on cultural hybridity may also obscure persistent power imbalances and material inequalities stemming from colonial legacies.

In his examination of colonial and postcolonial interactions, Homi Bhabha used the word “hybrid” to highlight the interconnectedness and subjectivity-building of these ties. The “Third Space of enunciation” is the foundation upon which all cultural expressions and systems are written, according to Bhabha. This area of ambiguity and conflict is where cultural identity is always present, which, according to Bhabha, renders the hierarchical assertion of cultural “purity” impossible. In his view, we may transcend the exoticism of cultural variety and instead realize a potent hybrid in which cultural differences can flourish, provided we acknowledge this contested realm of cultural identity (p. 17). Cultures in this realm are neither static nor unchanging but rather are subject to the continual effect of encounters and trades. This viewpoint casts doubt on hierarchical assertions of cultural purity by positing that all cultural manifestations are hybrid. Bhabha contends that we may stop exoticizing cultural differences and start creating spaces where different cultural expressions can live and even flourish if we recognize this disputed domain of cultural identity.

Bhabha discusses the concept of third space and hybridity in cultural theory. From Bhabha's point of view, hybridization is of great importance by creating a new, third space where different cultural elements can interact and coexist. He also pointed out that hybridization does not simply require mixing two original cultures or identities. The third space is strategies for creating completely new forms, perspectives, and cultural expressions. According to Bhabha, hybridization is a link that revolves around supporting the transformative and creative third space. This perspective allows different and diverse cultural influences to come together and become a single mass, leading to new influential possibilities (Rutherford, 1990, p. 211). Homi Bhabha's postcolonial idea of fusion is important because it goes beyond the simple idea of mixing two different cultures, but Bhabha's idea of the third space is not just mixing up old cultural identities; it also means the arrival of completely new forms and meanings. This third space is always changing, giving different cultural factors a place to connect in a way that changes them and creates new cultural forms. According to Bhabha, fusion creates a new space where cultural differences are discussed and rebuilt, opening exciting new ways to create identities and cultures. This place changes the simple ideas of "colonizer" and "colonized" because it creates new, mixed identities that challenge set cultural orders.

Furthermore, Nagendra Bhandari confirms the formation of hybridity: The transcultural form arising from the interaction of colonizer and colonized culture is referred to as hybridity in post-colonial discourse. Bhabha uses the notion of hybridity to explain how culture and identity are created in the face of injustice and hostility from colonialism. It results from interactions between colonizers and colonized that are culturally internalized. He contends that colonizers and colonized are mutually dependent in creating a common culture. Therefore, the interconnectedness and reciprocal formation of the subjectivity of colonizer and colonized result in hybridity. According to Bhabha, this kind of hybridity rejects essentialist conceptions of identity and instead embraces the diversity and multiplicities of identity. Bhabha recognizes the diversity of perspectives and experiences within hybrid environments (Bhandari, 2020, p. 82). Therefore, this method fosters a more sophisticated understanding of cultural identity that acknowledges complexity and rejects oversimplified classifications.

Bhabha uses the word stairwell as a metaphor for an intermediate space that questions fixed categories of identity by arguing that real contact happens in transitional

zones rather than rigid, opposing poles. This image lets identities change over time and keeps them from getting stuck in hierarchical categories like “top and lower” or “black and white.” In this area, identities are made and broken through the symbolic interactions that happen during these times of change, which shows how complicated cultural exchange is. Homi Bhabha gives an important example of that:

The stairwell as liminal space, in-between the designations of identity, becomes the process of symbolic interaction, the connective tissue that constructs the difference between upper and lower, black and white. The hither and thither of the stairwell, the temporal movement and passage that it allows, prevents identities at either end of it from settling into primordial polarities. This interstitial passage between fixed identifications opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy. (Bhabha, 1994, p. 4)

This is how the idea of cultural hybridity comes about, in which differences are not just accepted, but are actively sought out without imposing hierarchical energy systems. The stairs turn into a place where people can negotiate new identities by combining parts of each end without letting one side win out. This idea challenges the fixed frames that normally define identification. It creates a space for differences to grow, free from rigid labels or energy imbalances.

In the contemporary global day, Bhabha has expanded the use of the notion of hybridity beyond its colonial context to commemorate cultural fusions, the rebuilding of identities, and border crossings. In his cultural studies, he used the idea of “borderland” to explain the emergence of postcolonial cultures in the contemporary world. While colonial authorities often forced people to alter their identities during the colonial era, today’s population changes their identities voluntarily due to intercultural relationships, migration, political uprooting, or economic necessity (Tahsildar, 2013, p. 35). Also, the borderlands exist physically anywhere two or more groups come into touch, where individuals from various cultural origins share the same region where the distance between them becomes intimate, as Magdalena Naum referred, the most apparent is the geographical one; after all, boundaries delineating one’s control, settlement, or the known universe are bound by borders and borderlands. In the end, borders are also culturally, politically, socially, and ideologically contentious due to the fact that they are seen as limits of ownership or settlement. Some see frontiers as barriers to

communication, others as flashpoints in conflict, yet others as areas of ambiguous governmental control, and still others as incubators of innovative social and cultural practices. This changing terrain is characterized by the multiplicity of interactions along the boundary, among other things. It is possible for frontiers to grow into their own sovereign nation. Furthermore, they may be shaped into borders, which are thin and man-made lines that stand out in the landscape and make it obvious that they are there to separate, demarcate, and regulate (Naum, 2010, pp. 101-102). Borderlands are especially important to migrants because, when they move to new locations, they become places where their identities, customs, and social behaviors are closely influenced by the culture of the majority. Each conflict and invention may result from this encounter. While some see borders as impediments to communication or as a source of conflict between groups, others view them as spaces where new social norms and cultural practices might arise. Because these areas allow their diverse origins to mingle with those of the host way of life, migrants often embrace them as places of exclusion as well as places where the newest hybrid identities might emerge.

Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* and Hanif Kureishi's *The Buddha of Suburbia* gave a favorable idea to Bhabha about crossing cultural boundaries between countries "but it makes an immigrant laugh to hear the fears of the nationalist, scared of infection, penetration, miscegenation, when this is small fry, peanuts, compared to what the immigrant fears dissolution, disappearance" (Smith, 2000, Ch 12). Through this quote, Smith reflects the anxiety of immigrants who come from multiple cultures. It embodies the anxiety and fear of losing one's cultural identity while also being aware of resistance to the dominant culture. This dual presence incorporates Bhabha's concept of hybridity, whereby the immigrant experience powerfully challenges and redefines cultural boundaries. Also, Kureishi said at the beginning of his novel, "I am an Englishman born and bred, almost" (Kureishi, 1990, Ch 1). This quote makes it clear that Karim has a strong reversion to a hybrid identity, and there is a clear and frank tension between his British upbringing and his South Asian heritage. The word "almost" in the quote also refers to the interface between his identity and supports Bhabha's idea of cultural hybridity, whereby a person is not fully part of one culture or another but instead creates a new identity that questions cultural boundaries.

Bhabha refers to how our identities are complicated and never completely fashioned or constant. He argues that who we are is shaped through various influences,

including our way of life, reports, and locations where we have lived. Our identities are not simple or singular; they may be made from various factors and are always evolving. Because of this, we are constantly changing and adapting, which means that our identities are open to being rewritten or redefined through the years. In other words, we are never simply one aspect; we are a mix of many kinds of stuff, which can shift as we go through lifestyles (Raab & Butler, 2008, p. 58). A more complex and multi-faceted view of the self, one that recognizes the continuous interaction of many elements in forming our identities, is advocated by Bhabha via his acceptance of the complexity and multiplicity of human identity.

Also, Stuart Hall is the most important and prominent contributing scholar to the concept of hybridity, along with Homi Bhabha. According to Stuart Hall, the term “black” is frequently oversimplified, and critics should acknowledge the complexities of all forms of identification and ethnicity. “New ethnicities” enables the reorganization of identities and cultures, creating a place for translation and negotiation and, therefore, for hybridity (Hall, 2006, p. 443). Zadie Smith refers to the term “New ethnicities” in her novel *White Teeth* in this quotation: “Because this is the other thing about immigrants (Fugees, emigres, travelers): they cannot escape their history any more than you yourself can lose your shadow” (Smith, 2000, Ch 12). Within the framework of Hall’s concept of “new ethnicities” signifies the intricate process of constructing one’s identity. The protagonists in *White Teeth* confront their cultural history while navigating their position in a new society, exemplifying the notion of hybridity. Individuals’ identities are not static but rather undergo constant transformation via their engagements with many cultures and histories, creating opportunities for new identity constructs. Additionally, diasporic identity is never static; according to Hall’s idea, it is always evolving and incorporating new elements.

The phrase “cultural identity” is defined by position in terms of a single, shared culture, which may be seen as a collective “one true self” that is concealed inside the many other “selves” that are more surface or artificially manufactured. Individuals with a similar history and genealogy have this in common (Hall, 2015, p. 393). The common understanding of cultural identity is that it is based on a common ancestry and records of a shared, communal essence. This theory proposes that humans have a “one actual self” that determines their cultural affiliation, underneath the many identities they present, some of which may be seen as superficial or socially constructed. This more

fundamental, authentic identity binds people with similar cultural origins or historical experiences. The idea's proponent, Hall, stresses that, despite the variety of outward manifestations or roles that people may take on in different situations, at their core, cultural identification is bound to a shared beyond, which promotes unity and belonging among those who share the same heritage.

In the eyes of Hall, the function of the hybrid position is to stress the existence of otherness inside the presence of the dominant center; the hybrid stance is endowed with the essential power to destroy hegemonic structures (Frello, 2006, p. 7). As Hall points out, this doesn't mean that the Others have taken over as the center; rather, it means that the mixed position is "decentering" the center. That is, no main position stands in for the center, because each position is a center in its own right. Birgitta Frello supports Hall's idea when he said that the item that is cherished is, on the one hand, a variety of cultural ingredients that come from diverse places, and on the other hand, "transgression" in its broadest sense, including hybrids, mongrels, ambivalence, and other similar things. Furthermore, there has been an endeavor to reverse the advantage of being pure and instead focus on the unique and advantageous experience of migrants and exiles. These individuals occupy hybrid positions that are situated either on the periphery or in many cultures (p. 2). Furthermore, there has been an endeavor to reverse the advantage of being pure and instead focus on the unique and advantageous experience of migrants and exiles. These individuals occupy hybrid positions that are situated either on the periphery or in many cultures. Stuart once said that in order to move into "the center," one must have a sufficient level of familiarity with it. However, you need to be far enough away from it to be able to analyze and question it critically. It is this twofold movement, or what I believe some writers have referred to as the double consciousness of the migrant, the exile, or the stranger who relocates, who has this dual perspective of the world from the inside and the outside (Hall, 1995, p. 381).

As per Hall, those who have experienced displacement or are part of diasporas must possess dual identities, be fluent in two or more cultural languages, and be able to "translate" internally between these identities. Furthermore, he asserts that these hybrids continue to have strong connections and identifications with the customs and locations from where they sprang. On the other hand, they do not experience any illusion of a genuine "return" to the past. As Stuart Hall has outlooked in:

There are at least two different ways of thinking about ‘cultural identity’. The first position defines ‘cultural identity’ in terms of one, shared culture, a sort of collective ‘one true self, hiding inside the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed ‘selves’, which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common. (Hall, 2015, p. 393)

Moreover, cultural affiliation may be interpreted in fantastic ways, as Stuart Hall discusses. One view holds that people’s cultural identities are based on a common, communal essence, a “one proper self” that underlies the many identities that people may anticipate in different settings. A shared cultural heritage and common lineage provide the basis for this more profound sense of self. From this vantage point, people’s outward displays of identification are likely driven by social roles or other external forces, but their continuous cultural identity in the center brings them together via a common history. Rooted in a shared history, this perspective highlights the coherence and continuity of cultural identity.

1.2. Migration in the 20th Century

The ability to migrate is inherent to the human race. It is one of the three primary processes that have contributed to human evolution, the others being mutation and natural selection. José Moya and Adam McKeown said that life in premodern communities was constantly evolving. A history of mobility characterized by slow but steady change or simple continuity does not allow us to account for this reality. There is more than meets the eye when one considers the conceptual link between mobility and modernity. Along with feeding and reproducing, moving was an essential activity for our species. However, the mass movement of people and the associated “massification” of activities like production, communication, consumption, and culture were novel phenomena. Mass migration is one of the most fundamental aspects of these larger global dynamics that have molded our contemporary environment. As with the periodization of any social process, dating the change is a delicate balancing act. In contrast to the early 20th century, the first half of the nineteenth century provides a more significant turning point for mass migration and some of the other related phenomenon (Moya & McKeown, 2010, p. 9). During the colonial era, South Asians came to Britain as peddlers who represented the lower middle classes, cricket players especially famous

in their country, students in universities, housemaids, governesses whether educated or not, talented artists, etc. Some even stayed here, but there were not many of them. After the Second World War, things changed a lot. Britain went to South Asia and the West Indies to find the workers it badly needed to get its economy back on track after using up all its options in Europe. Thousands of South Asians with some skills and no skills came to work in the steel and textile industries. At first, they came alone, but later their families joined them. After them came skilled workers and professionals, especially doctors, whose help was very much needed to run the National Health Service. As the number of immigrants grew, calls for tighter controls on immigration grew. At first, different types of limits were put in place, and by 1971, the main movement had almost stopped because the need had become sufficient, especially for ordinary people.

As Roger Ballard believes, the significant increase in Britain's South Asian population, resulting from chain migration, was primarily driven by the post-war economic boom. However, these broad "push" factors do not fully account for why most settlers originated from specific regions in the subcontinent. Furthermore, it is unclear how members of these groups have developed increasingly varied strategies for adapting to life in the UK since their arrival. Also, he referred to Punjabi Sikhs and Muslims made up a significant portion of the peddler groups that laid the groundwork for mass migration after the conclusion of the Second World War. (Ballard, 2003, pp. 5-6). Understanding these subtle aspects is essential for grasping the many techniques South Asian migrants used to assimilate into British culture.

Hanif Kureishi refers that "the thing was, we were supposed to be English, but to the English, we were always wogs and nigs and Pakis and the rest of it" (Kureishi, 1990, Ch, 4). Generally speaking, the immigration laws of the 1970s forced foreigners to assimilate into British society; publicly, they were expected to adhere to English culture, while their own cultural practices were to be kept private and kept within the confines of their homes. But Kureishi conveys via Karim's ideas in *The Buddha of Suburbia* that this was often insufficient for the British, who continued to see the community as inferior to themselves. However, not all British citizens harbored the same perspective. Karim's father is reassured by his acquaintance Helen, whom he encountered while visiting his uncle and aunt in the suburbs: "But this is your home," she said. "We like you being here. You benefit our country with your traditions" (Ch 5). A significant number of British individuals in the 1970s were enamored of Eastern

cultures that had immigrated to Britain with immigrants from the former Empire. In British gastronomy, the prevalence of restaurants that serve Indian cuisine began to increase (Sedláková, 2018, p.16). Second-generation immigrants lack sentimental recollections of India, in contrast to their dads, like Jamila and Karim. This issue is prevalent in immigrant communities throughout several nations. The first generation often exhibits a stronger inclination to preserve traditions and ideals, whereas the second generation is more influenced by the culture of the country in which they were born (p. 19).

Moreover, a lively discourse persists in Britain regarding the impact of Thatcherism on the working and lower-middle classes. Some argue that it empowered these individuals to unlock their potential and enhance the quality of their lives, while others contend that the principles of independence and self-reliance ultimately led to greater despair and monotony for these groups. Radek Glabazña states that the discourse surrounding this issue has reached a particularly fervent level within the homes of South Asian migrants, whose status in British society has consistently been marked by contradictions and complexities. One approach to improving their circumstances could involve increasing their visibility within mainstream society, albeit under acceptable conditions, such as through participation in a television soap opera. Simultaneously, their engagement in the dominant society's cultural expressions and political dynamics would signify an alliance with a prevailing system that perpetually neglects their needs and does little to mitigate the challenges they encounter (Glabazña, 2010, p. 68). However, participating in the dominant culture's expressions and politics may imply an affiliation with a system that often ignores their demands and does nothing to address their issues.

Minorities experience feelings of alienation and others as a result of dominant discourse, which creates marginalization of individuals who come from various racial and ethnic origins. The fact that immigrants with a colonial history are kept away from the core of society in the postcolonial West causes them to experience feelings of otherness. As Karim said, "I was sick too of being affectionately called Shitface and Curryface, and of coming home covered in spit and snot and chalk and wood-shavings" (Kureishi, 1990, Ch, 5). The immigrants' lower expectations for life are partly a result of their incapacity to assimilate into society. They are paid less since they are considered "outsiders," and economic crises are certain to affect them. For instance, it is clear that

up until he moved into Eva's home, Haroon did nothing except watch television after returning from work. "Mum and Dad always felt out of place and patronized on these grand occasions, where lives were measured by money" (Ch 3). According to what we have discussed, every immigrant is yearning for a new country to call home. It is evident that a profound sense of homesickness is strongly ingrained in a nation that seems to be plagued by racial difficulties. In this respect, the connection between Haroon and Eva might serve as an example, and Haroon is seeking a third space to get rid of his own inferiority issue. Due to the fact that Eva is a lady who is completely apart from Margaret in every way, she is able to readily catch Haroon's attention with her money and social position (Kara, 2020, pp. 192-193). The suburbs represent confinement for Karim since they are inhabited only by immigrants and marginalized individuals. The suburbs serve as a reminder to immigrants of their status as outsiders. Eva belongs to the upper middle class and lives in the city rather than the suburbs. Karim, unable to endure suburban life any longer, consents to his parents' divorce (p. 193). When Karim commented about parents' conditions: "But divorce wasn't something that would occur to them. In the suburbs people rarely dreamed of striking out happiness. It was all familiarity and endurance" (Kureishi, 1990, Ch 1). Karim's perspective on this relationship illustrates the difficulties experienced by suburban immigrants, who often struggle with cultural expectations and restricted options, resulting in a widespread feeling of despondency and unrealized potential.

On the other hand, Bangladeshis who moved to Europe, notably to the United Kingdom and the United States, were seen to be prospective migrants. As ordinary migrants or settlers, many were granted access to the country. As a result, their existence and the possibility of establishing a permanent residence were more plausible (Uddin Ahmed, 2012, pp. 52-58). In order to show how different people have reacted to living in the city that is often said to be Britain's most effectively multicultural, Becky Taylor cites a study that compares and contrasts the perspectives of white working-class locals with those of South Asian migrants. Crucially, a common thread running through all the pieces is the significance of illuminating the gender, class, and origin inequalities within migrant and minority groups, in addition to the more apparent distinctions between migrants and the majority, as seen from the outside (Taylor, 2010, pp. 1- 2).

Samad Iqbal refers to the migrant's suffering at work through internal thoughts: "For what is the point, Samad would think, pushing aside two mints and a 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?” (Smith, 200, Ch 3). The meager tips Samad receives are a symbol of the devaluation of migrant labor in Britain and symbolize the monetary struggles faced by means of those in marginalized positions as well. This second captures the disillusionment and frustration of navigating a society that often overlooks and undervalues the contributions of its culturally hybrid members. “As Roger Ballard believes that “the jobs open to migrants were of a restricted kind - essentially those which the Indigenous population was unwilling to undertake because they were hot, hard, heavy, or low paid” (Ballard, 1987 p. 24). As time went on, the settlers began to have a growing sense of confidence that they would be able to “reunite” their families in their new circumstances without jeopardizing the dignity of the women (p. 26). Additionally, in addition to the backlog of cases involving family reunions, there is also a continuously growing number of applications from young people who have grown up in Britain like the characters in *white teeth* Millat Iqbal, Magid Iqbal, and Irie Jones and in *The Buddha of Suburbia* Karim Haroon, Allie Haroon, and Jamila Anwar.

2. CULTURAL HYBRIDITY IN *WHITE TEETH*

In 1975, Zadie Smith was born to a Jamaican mother and an English father. Since then, she has established herself as one of her generation's most influential and well-known writers. In the works of literature that she has produced, she investigates the dynamic link that exists between race, gender, cultural hybridity, and social class, and she also chronicles the implicit alteration that occurs in the lives of many minority groups within a multicultural society. By utilizing her powers of observation, comedy, and clever sarcasm, she skillfully mixes her knowledge of classic English novels with her articulation of the complicated realities of the colonial subject in the neocolonial center. This is achieved by her perceptive integration of these components. Through her nuanced portrayal of ethnic people, the author compels readers to confront their comfort zones and highlights the devastating consequences of migration on first- and second-generation immigrants in contemporary Britain. The essentialist and reductionist claim of neocolonial discourse, which links immigrants to backwardness, crime, and terrorism, are demolished via the nuanced representations of her immigrant characters from many backgrounds, beliefs, and races. This entails downplaying the advantageous attributes that immigrants exhibit.

Smith uses a variety of examples in her works to illustrate the fact that immigrants are not a homogenous group. She also emphasizes the importance of contextualizing any positive or negative issue pertaining to immigrants within the context of their own sociocultural and economic totality. This approach rejects racialized, nationalized, and localized generalizations and undermines a normative hierarchy between locals and immigrants. It is possible that this is one of the reasons why Smith is seen to be the voice of multicultural Britain. By incorporating realist, modernist, and postmodernist approaches into her writing, Smith subjectively fictionalizes a portion of the overall structure of Britain in the twenty-first century. Even while she creatively recounts an imagined totality of sociocultural and political situations in their historical forms, her individualization of social reality mirrors the material social process. The realities and social pressures that impact people's lives are also reflected in her work, either directly or indirectly. This could aid in concentrating on and analyzing twenty-first-century Britain's social, cultural, ideological, political, and economic history as they are mediated by the experiences portrayed through the

fictional characters created by Smith (Bağlama, 2020, pp. 21-22). By using this strategy, Smith can transform Britain's social environment into a fictitious world while simultaneously establishing her narratives on genuine, lived events.

Smith wrote the novel "*White Teeth*" when she was twenty-four years old, and it was released in 2000. However, partial portions of the novel were published in 1997. The work quickly became a bestseller and provided instantaneous renown to the author. *After World War II, the modern city of London*, depicted in Smith's novel *White Teeth*, grew into an example of a rich mix of many cultures. Smith's novel depicts the clash of civilizations between the innovative West and the traditional East, set in the late 20th century. She depicts by her narration that London is a "rapier", where first and second generations of immigrants' face conflict, and at the time, there is an adapt to other cultures. Smith, who is of Jamaican descent and is a second-generation immigrant, compares the first-generation immigrants to their children who were born in London, like Millat and Magid, are Sons of Samad and Alsana, and Irie is a daughter of Clara and Archie. These youngsters are now leading the way in creating an entirely new civilization.

White Teeth chronicles the lives of these generations, and through the novel, the lives of individual people are brought together in it, which is multilayered and spans up to three generations of the characters, such as Hortense Bowden, the first generation, Samad Miah Iqbal, second generation and Irie, and twin brothers present last generation "Magid and Millat". Smith delves into the past of every family shown, providing contextual details on the family lineage and shedding light on the people's behaviors. The camaraderie between British soldier Archie Jones and Bengali soldier Samad Iqbal, who fought alongside in World War II.

Eventually, the two men move into the same neighborhood with their considerably younger spouses. Archie wed Clara, a Jamaican native, and Samad wed Alsana, a Bengali lady, in a planned union. Smith uses the two couples as the book's focal point, tracing their lives together until they become parents. The focus then shifts to Millat Iqbals, Magid Iqbals and Irie Jones, where Smith highlights the difficulties of existing on the schism of different identities and cultures. In addition, Smith raises the issue of the generational divide between the two groups of immigrants, first and second generation, and their parents. Chalfens, a middle-class family of academics, are a third

family that keeps coming up in the narrative. Their existence reflects the struggles all three families have had to overcome to forge their own post-colonial identities. Along with difficulties unrelated to race, such as generational differences, religion, and social stratification, Smith highlights the hardship of being of diverse origin (Grenarová, 2017, pp. 53-54). Harrache HARRACHE and Mounira Siham have referred to “ethnicity is a term commonly used to describe a person who identifies themselves as belonging to a certain group of people because of their shared language, culture, and nation” (Harrache & Siham, 2020, p. 12). Therefore, the idea of ethnicity often represents a common sense of identity based on language, culture, or country.

Samad Iqbal struggles to keep his traditional Bengali Muslim values while raising his twin sons, Magid and Millat, in a Western, secular society. This ends in tension, as his sons develop one-of-a-kind attitudes towards faith, way of life, and identification. As Maurice O’Connor states in his article the first wave of emigres saw matters of Islam as a personal matter, prioritizing integration into Western cultural norms rather than openly expressing their Muslim identity. This ideological stance is contrasted with the perspectives of a small but noticeable group of second-generation South Asians who prioritize their identity as Muslims above everything else. Being associated with revivalist Islam gives them a distinct public identity that is apart from discussions about the country, and, from this side, Smith adopts an ironic perspective on the challenges of assimilation and cultural disparities in her narrative about three families from different ethnic backgrounds. One of these families is the Iqbals, a Bengali family that arrived in the UK during the significant wave of South Asian immigrants after World War Two. Samad Iqbal, the father of twins Magid and Millat, struggles with his impious and non-Islamic behaviors, such as consuming alcohol and engaging in self-indulgence, namely the sin of Islam “desiring other women” (O’Connor, 2015, p. 43). Later, Samad’s choice to send Magid to Bangladesh shows his internal struggle between maintaining cultural heritage and assimilating into British society; also, this action signifies Samad’s urgent endeavors to root one son in culture. Magid’s reemergence as a secular, westernized person highlights the ineffectiveness of such efforts, underscoring the futility of regulating identity development in a post-colonial context.

Samad is plagued by a feeling that the lifestyle and everyday allurements in Britain are causing him to deviate from the principles of Islam. The narrator employs irony to depict Samad’s persistent self-criticism, however, we sense that Samad is

actually comfortable with his worldly indulgences, despite his occasional outbursts of guilt, for example, when Samad declares, “I am corrupt, my sons are becoming corrupt, we all are soon to burn in the fires of hell” (Smith, 2000, Ch 8). Wherefore Rashida Islam says when they were children, Magid and Millat, who are Samad’s twins, were separated from each other because their father wanted to ensure that at least one of them remained connected to his origins. Even though they are brothers, they do not get along with each other and never become friendly. Despite living in a place like London, where he observes a society and morals that are corrupt, Samad wants to protect his cultural heritage. Wherefore, *White Teeth* explores the enduring debates around Nature and Nurture, which are deeply founded in the field of biological sciences. Smith’s treatment of the twins, Magid and Millat, suggests a preference for nurture over nature. Although the two brothers have genetic similarities, they are otherwise very unlike. Magid exhibits scholarly behavior and shows respect, but Millat is disregarded and displays a rebellious attitude. Due to being twins, their dissimilarities may be attributed to their respective upbringings, with Magid spending his formative years in Bangladesh and Millat growing up in Willesden Green (Islam, 2011, p. 67). For that reason, their dissimilarities show that common genetics are less influential in shaping an individual’s identity than their immediate surroundings, casting doubt on Samad’s claims of cultural determinism and purity.

Samad refers to Magid and Millat to become “a real Bengali, a proper Muslim” (Smith, 200. Ch 9), Samad decides, he must send one of his boys back to the country. After that, he has an ongoing internal conflict over which son to choose, and at the last minute, he enlists the aid of his closest buddy Archie, a self-proclaimed atheist and fellow patron of O’Connell’s, to teleport Magid back to Bangladesh, all without Alsana’s knowledge or agreement. Smith’s *White Teeth* mostly revolves around a “what if” scenario. For example, what if Millat, rather than his brother Magid, was the one who was sent to the Chittagong hills of Bangladesh? While the twins are physically separated from one another, this helps to underline the fact that identity may be performative by its very nature, with culture and society playing a significant part. As a result of Magid’s communication with his parents from the Chittagong hills, his life seems to be more pastoral overall, and Samad gets the impression that his choice, which was not well received, has been confirmed (O’Connor, 2015, p. 56). Moreover, there is a phrase that was found in Magid’s letters by Samad: “My son is for God, not men” (Smith, 2000, Ch

9). Samad observes a shift in tone, which suggests that the individual is becoming more mature and gaining more Eastern knowledge (O'Connor, 2015, p. 57). Samad, whose original goal in sending Magid to Bangladesh was to help him become a more devoted Muslim, Samad believes this shift as proof that his son has successfully assimilated into Bangladeshi society.

Otherwise, the Iqbals are faced with the challenge of Millat's cultural hybridity, which creates confusion in their household. This situation, known as *The Trouble with Millat*, highlights the typical divide between first-generation diasporans and their second-generation offspring. Alsana expresses her concerns about losing Millat's Bengali identity and becoming more English. Millat finds himself caught between conflicting secular values of free choice and an idealized identity shaped by Islam. This internal struggle creates a psychomachia as these opposing ideologies clash within his thoughts. According to *White Teeth*, Millat's borderline psychotic behavior stems from the fact that he is caught between two cultures that shouldn't be at odds with each other but are now incommensurable due to the political and ideological appropriation of religious beliefs. According to Maurice O'Connor that Millat's feeling of self-loathing, which is the result of his own split-identity, is thus equated by Smith with an intellectual embrace of Islam. Beginning in the 1980s and continuing forward, several South Asian Muslims in the United Kingdom used Islam as a manner of expressing their public identity (O'Connor, 2015, pp. 43-59). Smith associates Millat's adoption of radical Islam with a quest for identity and a sense of belonging in a society that excludes him. A significant number of second-generation immigrants in Britain embraced Islam in the 1980s and later as a means of publicly affirming their identity, countering both Western assimilation and the cultural expectations of their families.

On the other hand, Archie and Clara Jones also, face generational variations, especially as their daughter Irie grows up, searching to understand her blended-race identification and navigate the effects of her Jamaican history and British upbringing. Irie Archie's daughter who is of mixed heritage, also has identity difficulties throughout her life due to being part of a multi-ethnic household. Irie is eager to acquire comprehensive knowledge about the narratives, details, and clandestine occurrences pertaining to her familial lineage. Nevertheless, she acknowledges that several aspects remain undisclosed and concealed. She is aware that the absence of a historical bridge is the reason for the divide between her and her parents. Between the stories, Irie

experiences significant discord due to a substantial disparity in their recollection of historical events. This disparity leads to disputes between her family as well as inward turmoil. For instance, after engaging in a conversation with her mother Clara, Irie displays her wrath. Irie acknowledges that her predicament mostly sprang from a deficiency in her personal background. This individual is of mixed Jamaican and Anglo heritage. Irie Jones embarks on a quest for authenticity, ultimately cultivating a fascination with her Jamaican grandmother and her ancestral heritage. Therefore, she makes the decision to visit the residence of her Jamaican grandmother, Hortense, and reside there for a period of time. Moreover, Seda Arian confirms that Irie naturally feels compelled to enquire into the history of her family, particularly when she encounters a family with a unique pedigree. Understanding one's past and roots has great significance in shaping one's identity, as Irie believes. Hence, the absence of information about one's familial lineage or origins gives rise to substantial tensions and challenges, both within the family unit and inside the individual's own psyche (Arian, 2013, pp. 1682-1690). Smith, on the other hand, disapproves of the idea that knowing one's history may lead to emancipation since roots can bring obligations that make identification more complicated.

2.1. Representation of multicultural London

The multiethnic group of characters that Smith's show features is a representation of London in the modern day. On the most fundamental level, there is a mixture of people who speak English, Jamaicans, and Bengalis. Smith, on the other hand, is much too pragmatic in her evaluation of human nature to allow the subject of race and ethnicity to be left up to inquiry. Her performers are torn between distinct cultural norms and traditions (Islam, 2011, p. 69). While Smith has acknowledged that the book idealizes racial relations in the United Kingdom, she has also hinted that the multiethnic population of modern London is the novel's primary emphasis (Dyer, 2004, p. 92). Zadie Smith depicts people from diverse origins in North London in (*White Teeth*), elucidating the cultural and religious disparities among them. Given the dynamic nature of identity in many cultures, individuals who immigrate for a second time need assistance in properly and precisely identifying their sense of self. The characters' ability to synthesize elements of both their mother and family cultures contributes to the

challenge of character development. Additionally, it plays a crucial role in shaping historical and cultural perceptions, making it hard to exclude them from family customs (Zayed et al, 2024, p. 181). Smith elucidates the significance of social, cultural, and environmental history. Smith successfully navigates the challenges posed by the ancestral heritage and cultural barriers of an immigrant family in the multicultural city of London (p. 185).

The emergence of multicultural English in London has become a bright, more than wonderful vision through which one can examine how the language adapts and functions in diverse urban environments, thus creating great and lasting interaction by young people of different ethnic backgrounds in London, and from here a unique dialect has developed, mixed with the dialects of the Caribbean region, South Asian and traditional London English dialects. Jenny Cheshire et al. refer to learning about the patterns of the London multi-ethnic dialect in terms of its acquisition, the way different ethnic groups employ their constituent elements, and its position as an ethnically neutral variety. Because different speakers use these characteristics differently, we have named the resultant “variety space” Multicultural London English, acknowledging that the characteristics are only tangentially connected to particular racial or linguistic groups (Cheshire et al, 2011, pp. 8-31). According to Tra Tran Thu, the presence of multiculturalism in Britain might be seen as a natural consequence of its historical experience as an imperial power. Following the demise of the British Empire in the aftermath of World War II, a significant influx of individuals migrated to Britain with the intention of working, residing, and establishing permanent residency. All of these individuals were British subjects and were eager to fully use the benefits that came with their status. Many individuals want to personally see the region they studied in school. Indeed, that was their native land. The empire was encroaching on the homeland. Britain has witnessed major multicultural transformations over the years, especially London (Tran Thu, 2013, pp. 17-18). The multiculturalism in Britain, the country’s migratory patterns after WWII had strong ties to its past as an imperial power. Immigrants from Britain’s former colonies represented more than just a change in population; they also contributed to the development of Britain’s unique character. Due to Britain’s colonial history, many people saw moving to Britain as an opportunity to live in a place they thought was their home, in addition to a possibility for economic opportunity.

The lives of three families, the Joneses, the Iqbals, and the Chalfens, are deftly interwoven in Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* within the dynamic, multicultural setting of London, a city that is shown as both a home and a melting pot of cultures. London is no longer just the physical environment but also a symbolic meeting point of many identities, histories, and ethnicities, reflecting Britain's postcolonial reality. Smith examines how race, heritage, and generational divides are managed within a modern urban setting via these families' frequent interactions and changing relationships. Tra Tran Thu states that the whole of the plot of *White Teeth* takes place in London, with occasional excursions to Jamaica, India, and Eastern Europe. It serves as the residence and gathering spot for the primary characters. The lives of the three families intertwine and become interconnected in this setting. The story explores the interrelationships among individuals of different racial backgrounds in London, including white, brown, and black residents (p. 29). Thus, London serves not just as a basic backdrop for the plot, but also as a physical manifestation of a collective past, where all the characters must coexist. Therefore, throughout the whole of *White Teeth*, London is a city that vibrantly embraces and embraces diversity (pp. 29-30). Smith points out that London as a place became like Noah's Ark after World War II because it accommodated all cultures, especially those countries that had been colonized.

Smith reflects the novel's focus on multiculturalism and the blending of different cultural identities, and that London became multiracial after World War II, especially when Archie states when he comes to a party to celebrate. "Two black guys, a topless Chinese girl, and a white woman wearing a toga were sitting around on wooden kitchen chairs, playing rummy" (Smith, 2000, Ch 1). Also, Clara Bowden is reflecting at the range of the individuals who frequented her Jehovah's Witness Kingdom Hall, showcasing the multicultural nature of her environment and the various backgrounds of people she encountered when she said "From Whitechapel, there had been many such redeemed characters. Mr. Van, the Chinese chiropodist, Mr. Segal, a Jewish carpenter, Rosie, a Dominican woman who continuously popped round" (Ch 3). The activities and cultures that happened at the party with the individuals from diverse ethnic backgrounds symbolize the amalgamation and coexistence of various cultures. Also, Smith employs these instances to illustrate the city's evolution into a center of multicultural engagement, as evidenced by Archie's observations and Clara's memories.

If we highlight the topic of religion, which is another manifestation of societal dynamics, this shows how multicultural London is, with people from different backgrounds living and celebrating together. Glenard Oak School's celebration of these events reflects London's diversity and efforts to include everyone, regardless of their religions or cultures, when Mrs. Owens, the headmistress of the school talks to Samad 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, Ramadan, Chinese New Year, Diwali, Yom Kippur, Hanukkah, the birthday of Haile Selassie, and the death of Martin Luther King. (Smith, 2000, Ch 6)

So, an example of London's cosmopolitan setting and its attempts to promote diversity is the inclusion of several religious and ethnic festivals at Glenard Oak School. An institutional effort to acknowledge and celebrate the variety of the student population is shown by Mrs. Owens' acknowledgment of events from several religions, including Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, and Rastafarianism. This demonstrates how London's ethnic institutions try to balance the demands of fair representation with diversity.

2.2. Identity and Belonging

Zadie Smith explores the intricacy of identity in her novel *White Teeth*, as the characters' identities vary depending on their country of origin, such as Jamaica, India, and England, including those of Jewish ancestry. Furthermore, the characters coexist in North London, which serves as a deliberate means for Smith to depict the cultural and theological disparities among them. Each character in her work has a distinct identity with their own unique past. Smith explores this variety by depicting both the first and second generations of immigrants. The portrayal of identity in *White Teeth* explores the intricate and pivotal role it plays in people's lives, influenced by the factors of time and geography (Rizgar, 2016, pp. 6-7). The immigrants feel endangered as a result of their cultural and ethnic differences. Smith places great emphasis on their desire to preserve their cultural heritage and retain a strong sense of identity. Furthermore, these racial tensions give rise to a multifaceted problem and predicament, including the challenge of

safeguarding and preserving one's identity. As Hamza Bağlama states the immigrant characters in *White Teeth* can't take part in making decisions about state and public life, feel confident because they are constantly moving, mistrusting others, competing too much, not having a stable identity, or being culturally significant. They also can't become part of mainstream society. What this means is that the colonizers make identities by changing the Orient's culture and intellectual limits (Bağlama, 2019, p. 81). Their lack of participation in public life and decision-making highlights wider societal structures that marginalize immigrants. This corresponds with Homi Bhabha's theory of the "unhomely," which posits that migrants inhabit a liminal space, being neither fully integrated into the dominant culture nor completely connected to their origins (Bhabha, 1994, p. 9). Moreover, Bhabha articulates the ways in which colonial powers interfere with indigenous cultures, reformulating identities to align with Western intellectual paradigms.

According to Geeta Patil and Rajiv Junne, in contrast to popular belief, identities do not "exist" in a vacuum but rather emerge from a specific historical context. Therefore, it is not an essence in and of itself but rather a posture. We classify ourselves according to the tales that have shaped our history. Historical and cultural factors, as well as the passage of time, shape an individual's sense of self. Cultural identity becomes more complex when there are similarities and variances among identities (Patil & Junne, 2019, p. 155). Also, Cultural homogenization and globalization pose a challenge to local cultures, leading individuals to fear losing their identity. As a result of this cultural loss, the people are prouder of their heritage and history, similar to Samad's action of sending his son to uphold the family name and keep to his history (p. 155). "But it makes an immigrant laugh to hear the fears of the nationalist, scared of infection, penetration, miscegenation, when this is small fry, peanuts, compared to what the immigrant fears dissolution, disappearance" (Smith, 2000, Ch 12). In this new global period, minorities and majority groups alike are fighting for recognition of their unique cultural and social identities.

While Magid identifies as a Bengali Muslim in terms of his nationality and religion, his interests lie with the English; he dresses in a suit, hangs out with white people, and even eats bacon. The significance of an individual's identity lies in the fact that it is subject to change, regeneration, and ongoing evolution. "Magid was in some kind of costume, and when I asked him what it was for, he wouldn't speak" (Ch 6) "What

is it I can get you, Magid?’ Mickey leaned over the counter, all concerned, like an over-attentive shopgirl. ‘I think,’ replied Magid, slowly surveying the dusty chalkboard menus on the wall, ‘I should like a bacon sandwich’ (Ch 17). Millat, for example, doesn’t know anything about his past, so he is worried and doesn’t know where he comes from or where he goes. Millat lives in a world that doesn’t know anything about his past or roots. Because Millat doesn’t know much about his historical memory and historical knowledge of Bangladesh, he must deal with some struggles. History is very important in a mixed culture. Furthermore, Iqbal’s family is the main example of the idea that migrant society is falling apart or facing struggles for belonging to identity. While Samad’s twins are still young, they are living in a world where Iqbal’s beliefs are falling apart. As a traditional Muslim Bangladeshi, Samad wants his kids to see themselves as truly Bangladeshi and Muslim. He also thinks he is in a lot of trouble because neither of his kids feels like they belong to their society and traditions (Ali & Ibrahim, 2019, p. 338). Samad really wants to keep the Bangladeshi identity alive, especially for his sons. It shows how worried he is about losing their culture and blending in too much.

Samad believes that those kids are mostly grown up and not following Muslim morals and rules. According to Samad, all of those actions go against their lives and traditions. However, the second-generation refugees are continuing to do those wrong things. Similar to Samad, the other parents are aware that the breakdown of their ethnic society is leading to a place where their children are becoming less safe. It might be concerning that the three offspring of immigrants from the second generation, Millat, Magid, and Irie, avoid their heritage and forge unique identities in disparate ways. Even though Samad’s sons are identical twins, they exhibit their own personalities from a young age. Magid is a reserved young man who enjoys physics and mind games such as chess, whereas Millat, his brother, is a loud, outgoing person who loves rap music and sports. Even as a schoolboy, Magid is creating his identity as Mark Smith, a way for him to break away from his lineage. Magid rejects his cultural heritage and forges a Western, global persona, even though Samad worked hard to raise and educate his boys in his native Bangladesh. Millat, in contrast, shares his father’s identity crisis as he tries to reconcile his religious and secular upbringing. His ability to adapt to diverse situations and move between many social positions, together with his calm appearance and impoliteness, help him become the leader among his nobility when he is a young man. The inherent paradox of both embracing and rejecting Western popular culture creates

Millat an unstable individual who is still in the process of identity formation. Primarily, his racial and religious activity serves as a defiance against his father, Samad, who perceives him as a perpetual troublemaker; by adhering to the tenets of the Quran and embracing his faith, he seeks to demonstrate that he is a more devout Muslim than both his father and brother (pp 339- 341).

Taryn Beukema has outlined about brothers' inability to identify themselves in connection with one another highlights the significance of their histories and the ways in which their origins and pathways have shaped their identities, which in turn make them unfamiliar with one another. This incident highlights the inescapability of the past. These twins are unable to turn around, to change their paths, or to progress in the same ways they started because of what their father taught them, their father's history, and their culture (Beukema, 2008, p. 11). They are just as lost as before, trapped in the difficult process of building their own identities. On the one hand, Smith seems to be offering a critique of fixed conceptions of identity; on the other, she implies that development.

Clara demonstrates adaptability in her language and English accent, adjusting both to match the situation and the individuals she is conversing with. This behavior may indicate her heightened awareness of identity concerns. This linguistic transformation is indicated by a change in her location, which subsequently results in an instantaneous alteration in her sense of self. The transitions, as emphasized by the narrator, symbolize her ancestry and heritage, which she is determined to preserve. Nevertheless, Clara's appreciation for her cultural heritage is also shown with a mixed feeling of uncertainty, as she recognizes the challenges involved and the ongoing battle to maintain her sense of self. Being the offspring of an immigrant, her language and skin color are deeply ingrained in her identity. This demonstrates her cognizance of the impossibility to determine any kind of identity and recognizes the perpetual change (Namayanja, 2023, pp. 198, 200). Clara's decision to adopt the persona of an atheist, despite her persistent need for a savior, serves as a valid justification for her subsequent estrangement from her own character. Although she still has the ability to visit her mother's home, she is now considered an outsider since someone else has claimed that space. She must not only relocate to the land of the colonial ruler, but also to the residence of Archibald Jones, the potential savior. Upon her marriage to Archibald,

whom the narrator refers to as the fusion of “Dog and Cat” (Smith, 2000, Ch 2), she finally achieves wedded bliss with Archie.

The primary motivation for Clara’s decision to wed Archie Jones, an Englishman, is closely connected to her desire to be liberated from the influence of her mother, Hortense, who is a Jamaican woman who is very religious. Furthermore, Clara and Archie had a daughter named Irie, since her parents believe that Irie does not fit into English society, and she also rejects her Jamaican identity. Additionally, she aims to establish her persona as an English woman rather than a Jamaican, which is why she portrays herself as an English lady. This demonstrates the manner in which the individual is reduced to mere replicas in the postmodern British culture, indicating her recognition of her lack of substance; she is always plagued by sensations of emptiness and lack of genuineness. Similarly, she is unable to emulate the beauty of English delicate women; she experiences a sense of alienation in a foreign land, which demonstrates her awareness of her inner emptiness. She is perpetually plagued by feelings of inauthenticity and empty spaces in this country. The moment Irie felt most racist was when she was reading *The Dark Lady* by William Shakespeare, these works gave Irie a feeling of high confidence, as a hybrid person born in London, but that confidence was quickly shattered when her teacher commented whether she was black or dark-skinned, it was impossible for her to be like that “unless she was a slave of some kind” (Smith, 2000, Ch 11). Due to this racist remark, Irie retreats into her own world once again, recognizing her lack of acceptance within English culture and Zadie Smith has given the idea that immigrants face racism and identity struggles, even from intellectuals like Irie’s Teacher (Ali & Ibrahim, 2019, p. 333). Individuals find themselves navigating the complexities of their native culture alongside the dominant culture, resulting in a hybrid identity that frequently lacks full acceptance or understanding from both sides. The teacher’s comment highlights a lack of understanding and acknowledgment of Irie’s multifaceted identity, leading her to withdraw as she navigates her position in a society that often marginalizes her.

Irie recognizes the importance of her residence at Bowden’s, which aids her in understanding her heritage and identity. The Chalfens persuaded Irie to accept her lack of belonging, while Bowden’s narratives, which reflect Jamaican beliefs, lead Irie to believe she does have a home. Consequently, Irie believes she is connected to Jamaica, which becomes a new obsession for her. Moreover, she has ceased to engage with

English culture; rather, she prioritizes her Jamaican heritage (p. 335). Irie's transformation, particularly her reunion with her Jamaican heritage via Bowden's writings, symbolizes the postcolonial pursuit of a rooted identity. Irie's interaction with the Chalfens first highlights her sense of displacement and cultural dissonance; the Chalfens' intellectualized, Anglo-centric perspective gently reinforces a sense of "cultural un-belonging," leading Irie to seek a genuine heritage outside the limitations of England. Bowden's Jamaican-influenced viewpoints, in contrast, stimulate Irie's reclamation of her historical heritage, enriching her identity with a specific locus that challenges the Chalfens' rationalist principles. Irie's newfound focus on Jamaica represents a reconnection to her ancestral story as a means of resistance against Western hegemonic frameworks, where identity is dynamically shaped via both acceptance and rejection of imposed cultural identities.

The character of Archie Jones explores that there is a cultural clash between different cultural identities, and many tensions arise from these cultural clashes, so Archie Jones feels separated from his cultural roots. Although he is a British man, he is developing his relations with his Bangladeshi and Jamaican neighbors. After Archie attempted suicide due to the harsh past with his ex-wife, he returned to life again, and his ties to his previous life became very weak as "He had unhooked the old life" (Smith, 2000, Ch 1). Also, this quote reflects Archie's inner mind as he contemplates his detachment from his past and his unsure future. It conveys his sense of disconnection from any experience of "home" or acquainted identification after letting pass of his previous lifestyles. No matter where Archie goes to the bar, his neighborhood, or even his own mixed-race nuclear family, he will surely encounter people of all various races. Nevertheless, considering his marriage to Clara, it seems that he is, to a certain extent, marginalized from the 'white' English classification, being designated a mixed identity by his coworkers' other relatives, and acquaintances (Reppen, 2023, pp. 11-13). Archie struggles to harmonize his British identity with the varied influences of his environment, contending that his mixed-race family and multicultural neighborhood compel him into a liminal space, where he does not fully belong to the predominant white British culture nor entirely to the immigrant cultures he engages with. Additionally, Stuart Hall's idea of identity as a process of becoming rather than being (Hall, 1994, p. 394) is mirrored in Archie's metaphorical "unhooking" of his previous existence. In this view, identity is not fixed but continually rebuilt via experiences.

2.3. Significance of historical events

A person's national history encompasses the period of British colonialism, its imperialism in the East Indies and the Caribbean, the Second World War, and the decolonization that followed. The older people in Smith's work, her first-generation immigrants, keep it in their memories of the past. They had firsthand contact with British colonialism, and they remember its consequences for their own nations, which has somewhat shaped their perception of England, their new home. In this way, there is an inherent and inevitable weaving together of the national and personal pasts. Because her characters' actions and beliefs about the future are influenced by their historical consciousness or lack thereof, the national history in the story acts as a backdrop for their personal pasts (Čechová, 2014, p. 2). For the radical's first-generation immigrant characters, who carry the legacy of British colonialism with them, Smith highlights in *White Teeth* the interconnectedness of individual tales with national histories. The colonial authority that these people remember vividly shapes their views of Britain and how they adjust to living there as a "new home." As they go about their daily lives in London, they keep in mind the historical context of imperialism's effects on their home countries as they learn about England. In academic discussions, the idea of historical attention is often brought up. According to Stuart Hall's ideas on identification, these memories of colonial subjection impact not just individual self-notion but also group immigrant identities in postwar Britain. History and identity are interwoven in this narrative that emerges from the ongoing dialogue between the "personal past" of individuals who endured the repercussions of British colonial rule and the "national history" of the country as a whole. The national Beyond acts as a "backdrop" to each individual's talent, molding their destiny in often subtle but permanent ways.

Many contemporary British hold a belief that the Empire's primary goal was not just about economic or cultural benefits for Britain, but rather a noble duty of a developed nation to guide primitive nations towards civilization and Christianity. While some embraced this doctrine with enthusiasm, others voiced significant criticism. Regardless, it played a role in justifying Britain's influence over various countries in East Asia, such as Pakistan, Bangladesh, and India, as well as in Africa, including Nigeria, South Africa, and Kenya. Smith sees it from the opposite point of view because she can judge the effects of British rule in its countries from the point of view of someone

living at the time. In *White Teeth*, Smith writes from the unbiased point of view of someone who knows about the cultural, economic, and political effects that Britain had on its colonies, effects that can still be seen in those countries even after they were no longer colonized. Smith's characters in the novel, particularly the first-generation immigrants, were raised in British colonies where they were frequently compelled to comply with the directives and orders of the dominant minority at that time (pp. 4-5). Smith's book articulates the marginalized viewpoints of first-generation immigrants, who endured the direct consequences of colonialism and now contend with its lingering impacts in Britain.

There are memories that Samad recounts what his English colonial superiors told him during World War II. "Samad Miah Iqbal, Samad, we are going to confer on you a great honor. You will fight in mainland Europe. Do not starve and drink your own piss in Egypt or Malaysia; no, you will fight the Hun where you find him" (Smith, 2000, Ch 5). Smith recounts the circumstances that brought Archie and Samad together for the first time, setting the stage for a friendship that would last a lifetime. Samad had no choice but to serve in the British army during World War II since he was a native of Bangladesh, one of Britain's colonies. But Samad ought to have seen it as an honor, not a command. Also, Smith highlights the historical hero in white teeth, Mangal Pande, a great-grandfather of the fictitious Samad Iqbal, is mentioned by Smith, which is another significant connection to the colonial history of the Indian subcontinent. Smith's inclusion of Mangal Pande is an important example of this. It is true that Mangal Pande, also known as Pandey, was a historical person. According to the sources, Pande was a sepoy, which is a term that refers to an Indian soldier who served under British command in India. In the year 1857, Pande rebelled against the rule of the British and attacked British officials. This event marked the beginning of the most significant uprising in India, which was known as the Indian Mutiny of 1857. The British were able to brutally suppress this event. During the aftermath of this insurrection, the British believed Pande to be a traitor; yet, in India, he is remembered as a champion for independence (Čechová, 2014, p. 6). As Samad expressed his great-grandfather's immortal historical heroism:

I should be soaring with the Royal Airborne Force, shelling from on high! I am an officer! Not some mullah, some sepoy, wearing out my chappals in hard service. My great-grandfather Mangal Pande' – he looked around for the recognition the name

deserved but, being met only with blank pancake English faces, he continued ‘was the great hero of the Indian Mutiny!’ (Smith, 2000, Ch 5)

Samad feels that Pande’s inclusion in a racial or national history provides him with credibility and a foundation for writing his own history and the history of his family, which he would then pass on to his sons. He also feels that his sons’ positive attitudes towards England, their birthplace, are influenced by their awareness of the nation’s history. Moreover, neither the national nor their personal history has any bearing on the second generation of major characters, who are Irie, Archie’s daughter, and Samad’s twin boys. They have no idea what country they were born into or what significant events in their family history their parents have neglected to impart to them.

Smith shows that for the second generation of immigrants, it’s almost impossible to fix problems related to their identity or relationship to their home country because their ties to their family or national traditions are broken or even lost. The terms “the past” and “root” have significant roles in *White Teeth*. Smith exemplifies the importance of knowing one’s ancestry in shaping one’s identity, which is crucial for all individuals but especially for those growing up in multicultural or multiethnic households. Hence, as shown via Irie and the Iqbal twins, one’s appraisal of oneself and one’s proper place in the world suffers when one is ignorant of their own history. Samad is laxity and neglects to teach his boys any history of Bangladesh; as a result, they are completely ignorant of the events surrounding the East Indies colonial rule by the British and its illustrious forerunner “Mangal Pande” (Čechová, 2014, pp. 8,14). Figures like Mangal Pande define today not just personal credibility but also a link to a great national story Samad must carry on. Represented by Irie and the Iqbal twins, the second generation negotiates a fractured identity mostly detached from the past of their parents. This disconnection captures the difficult circumstances experienced by children of immigrants growing up in multicultural surroundings as they struggle with a loss of grounding in their ancestral origins; the lack of this basic knowledge ends in an existential blank.

2.4. Language

Regarded as exceptional in its scope and fluidity, *White Teeth* serves as a multifaceted depiction of the diverse, ethnic environment of contemporary London. The

narrative focuses on three groups of culturally and ethnically varied parents and their offspring while also including many allusions to other periods and previous generations. It delineates the lives of the Iqbals, the Joneses, and the Chalfens. The Iqbals, Samad and Alsana, are Bengali Muslims. The Joneses represent a blend of races and ethnicities, with Clara being Black Jamaican and Archie being White English. The Chalfens are part of the British Jewish family. A novel is a fictional work mostly composed in prose that adheres to conventional language and stylistic rules (Khan, 2020, p. 2). *White Teeth* contains certain verbal inflections that set the book apart from other books because Smith has hearing that is highly attuned to language inflections and their social subtleties. Not only is it important to describe non-standard language variations in a sociolinguistic study of *White Teeth*, but it's also important to ascertain if these varieties are accurately depicted against the background of London's linguistic environment. Jamaican Creole mostly gets its words from English, but it also takes from a lot of other languages (pp. 2, 5). In the dialogue between Clara Bowden and her mother, Hortense Bowden, speaking in a language other than English, which gives the reader that London is mixed with many other languages or taken from the English language. "The girl objected in another language, picked up the bag of hair in question from the counter and made as if to leave with it" (Smith, 2000, Ch 11). Smith's choice of Jamaican Language in this quotation implies that the language is a means of cultural preservation and struggle for immigrant families, often opposing English's hegemony.

London's youth language is a full language with its own words and rules for writing. Individual terms include youth sociolect, youth slang, and street talk. Lexical pieces and phrases make up most of it. There is also a grammar side to youth language that is much harder to explain. Because words are used and then drop so quickly, it's hard for writers like Zadie Smith to keep accurate records of what young people say. Teenagers' language changes quickly because it is easy to shape, and it often takes parts from other languages. Young people are more open and adaptable than people of other ages, which is why this change happens so quickly. "Magid had the brains, Magid would settle down quicker, learn the language quicker" (Ch 5). Besides making up new words and borrowing words from other languages, youth language also finds new ways to use words that already exist. It is possible to use these words in their original grammar form, but they may also have new meanings. The linguistic patterns in *white teeth* illustrate how characters align with or distance themselves from certain ethnic groupings. All

these cases include the recognition of the ideological significance of language and the challenge of transcending socio-cultural disparities. Through various forms of communication about action and social performance, individuals overcome bias and develop successful communication, facilitating the transculturation process (Khan, 2020, pp. 5, 10).

Mansisa Ntoya comments that regarding the title of the book, *White Teeth*, it is possible to interpret it as a representation of the human race. *White teeth* are present in every single human person, despite the fact that these teeth are not aligned in the same way in every single mouth and are not set against the same skin color. Furthermore, *White Teeth* may be a symbol of language due to the fact that language is a form of communication that is used by all individuals, although not all individuals talk in the same manner. As a result, this is consistent with the author's emphasis throughout the book on diversity, migration, (non-)integration, and identity, all represented via language (Ntoya, 2018, pp. 3-4). The teeth, regardless of alignment or skin tone, represent a fundamental sameness that transcends racial and cultural barriers. Teeth may also signify language since they have a function in speaking, underscoring Smith's focus on communication as both a bridge and a barrier across civilizations.

On the other hand, an apparent interest in language concerns serves as the foundation for *White Teeth*'s central theme, which is a meditation on English identity. This fact ought to be obvious to any reader who approaches the book. Language not only serves as a representational tool for the author, but it also serves as an appropriate metaphor for a world that is defined by unpredictability and is teeming with all kinds of different people and cultures. It is necessary to provide a concise introduction to Smith's enormous cast of characters before analyzing her approach to the linguistic dilemma. Despite their disparate origins and varied life experiences, these individuals share at least two commonalities: firstly, the "*white teeth*" referenced in the title, a multifaceted symbol that signifies not only vitality in humans but also their need for stability and predatory instincts; and secondly, a clear capacity for verbal communication (Ledent, 2016, p. 2). Furthermore, the integration of local and global identities is through the reflection of linguistic dialogue in a culture, which creates cultural hybridity.

Keep in mind that Smith's use of contrasting voices and their interweaving have subversive undertones that impact the building of a new Englishness. This is achieved

by portraying language, a vital indicator of one's identity, as intrinsically complex and impure. It seems fitting that in *White Teeth*, "standard British English" has become something of a peripheral language, somewhat de-centered. Few characters speak 'Queen's English', especially the arrogant Chalfens. Strangely enough, Magid speaks Standard English too. He is one of the twins whose father sent him to Bangladesh so that he could grow up away from the bad influences of the West. The boy is "more English than the English" (Smith, 2000, Ch 15) when he gets back to this country. It would seem that colloquial English has taken root in London, yet this new standard remains elusive due to the vernacular's diversity and dynamic nature. Accordingly, if *White Teeth* is meant to depict a "speech community," then this socio-linguistic concept can only be interpreted in this context as a collection of individuals who share more than just one language, but a repertory of languages or dialects (Ledent, 2016, pp. 4-5). Millat and Irie affect the habits and language of Samad, who in turn "Bengalizes" English terminology, a reciprocal process that has sometimes been overlooked. Typically, English individuals are seen as instructors of the correct language, whilst so-called outsiders are regarded as either perilous infiltrators or appreciative students. Undoubtedly, a need for purity is present in every culture (p. 5). Mary is a homeless and mentally unstable woman who overhears Milat and Majid talking in Bengali she reflected on the racist and xenophobic hostility faced by migrant communities in London, she said: "What did you call me? You – what did you say? You little bastards. Can't tell me in English? Have to talk your Paki language?" (Smith, 2000, Ch 9). In contrast to the purportedly predictable and manageable future offered by science and religion, this future encompasses a significant degree of unpredictability and uncertainty similar to the linguistic landscape of postcolonial London. (Ledent, 2016, p. 6). When it comes to cultural differences, the language of the "other" is looked down upon and seen as less important. Postcolonial societies, like London, are also marked by linguistic and cultural doubts that make them hard to put into simple groups.

3. CULTURAL HYBRIDITY IN *THE BUDDHA OF SUBURBIA*

On December 5, 1954, Hanif Kureishi was born in England, “Kent,” to a white English mother and an Indian Pakistani-Muslim father. Among the most well-known in Great Britain and internationally, he is a writer, filmmaker, and dramatist. Born in Bromley, South London, he subsequently attended King’s College London, where he obtained a philosophy degree. His many literary creations have been published in 36 languages. Originally published in 1990, his semi-autobiographical book *The Buddha of Suburbia* received the Whitebread Prize for Best First Novel; BBC dramatized this work in 1993. Individuals’ personal experiences as a non-homogeneous guy of mixed backgrounds, contemporary British concerns, and the psychology of individuals are the main subjects of all of Kureishi’s writings.

In point of fact, the cinematic work of Kureishi may be seen as an alternative discourse that raises issues about the past of colonialism, which was being rewritten into the national mythology by films of the Raj Revival. As Andreas Athanasiades states, through his film work, Kureishi switched the emphasis of his work away from the latter days of the Empire and the Indian space. Instead, he brought the action to modern Britain, changing the scene from India to the imperial metropolis. His characters reflected the present racial, sexual, and socioeconomic realities of Britain (Athanasiades, 2013, pp. 41-42). A modern British society that is defined by diversity and hybridity on many levels is shown in Kureishi’s post-national films, which present ambiguous pictures of that society.

When Hanif Kureishi was writing his early book, *The Buddha of Suburbia*, which is now considered a pivotal work about growing up as an Asian of mixed race in Britain during the 1970s. Susheila Nasta states that Kureishi initially attempted to create a fictitious image of his father. Since then, he has continued to include family members in his works of fiction, including novels, short tales, and films like “*My Beautiful Machine*.” Following the discovery of his late father’s unpublished work, *An Indian Adolescence*, Kureishi shifted his focus to narratives that were not based on anything fictitious. In the book “*My Ear at His Heart: Reading My Father*,” which was released in 2004, the author utilizes the text as a means of gaining access to his father’s tale. This allows him to begin to comprehend his father’s boyhood in India, as well as the broken relationships and migrations that were brought about by the Partition (Nasta, 2006,

p.19). Moreover, the unpublished fictional writings of his late father disclose elements of his character, experiences in London and the Subcontinent, and thwarted creative aspirations, which mirror Kureishi's own evolution and remarkably successful writing career. Kureishi's early piece, *borderline*, was produced by the Royal Court Theatre and centered on Asian immigrants in Southall. Kureishi's caustic humor and hedonistic character distinguish him as a novelist well aware of the Zeitgeist while also subverting its principles. The Asian cultural milieu of traditional morals starkly contrasts with the hedonistic secularism shown in *The Black Album* (1995). Kureishi has an interest in psychology, and the continual exploration of the self is evident in many tales, serving as the primary premise of the book (2008) *Something to Tell You*.

Kureishi's success in flipping the script on what it means to be English paved the way for a slew of other authors, including Ayub Khan Din, Meera Syal, and Zadie Smith (JRank Articles, 2024, n. p. from web). Kureishi has played a revolutionary role in redefining English identity through his realistic depiction of cosmopolitan Britain. The work of Kureishi paved the way for new narratives that represent the experiences of diasporic and mixed-race communities by challenging established ideas of Englishness. His work is a watershed point in British literature because it questions national identity, belonging, and racial conflicts via its bold narrative. Despite his subsequent difficult personal circumstances, his work continues to serve as a benchmark for postcolonial British literature's explorations of identity and belonging.

The Buddha of Suburbia was the first novel by playwright, novelist, screenwriter, and filmmaker Hanif Kureishi; he won the Whitbread Award with this novel. However, the first chapter of the book was originally published in Harper's magazine in 1987 as a short story, and Kureishi revised and finished the work before releasing the final version in 1990. *The Buddha of Suburbia* has been translated into twenty languages. Also, the ironies of adolescence in *The Buddha of Suburbia* hinge on the reader's capacity to perceive wry and subtle humor in the convergence of volatile cultural entities; moreover, Kureishi's portrayal of British Asian identity critiques its reification and suggests an essential and nuanced complexity in the broader politics of identity. Kureishi's books render him an astute commentator on the intricacies of post-coloniality and immigrant experiences, a perspective he has used to examine Asian identity within the broader context of post-1960s Britain.

In *The Buddha of Suburbia*, Kureishi questions traditional ideas of nationhood and association through themes of hybridity, sexuality, and rising up. The book is an important look at Britain's social and cultural scene in the 1970s and 1980s. Andreas Athanasiades argues also that the novel was a modern sociocultural reference to sexuality and human relationships in Britain in the 1970s. Kureishi continued to insert hybridity and multiplicity into places that seemed to be homogeneous, like British society in the 1980s, while also challenging traditional ideas of nation and history. In Kureishi's writing, he makes fun of the parts of postwar British culture that affect sexuality, race, and identity. In *The Buddha of Suburbia*, London is the setting, and the sexual, drug, and music subcultures are the main themes. The book shows how different kinds of emotions can upset the symbolic order of time, and it also talks about what it means to be an individual in a postcolonial setting (Athanasiades, 2013, pp. 92- 94).

The novel starts with Karim, the protagonist, a young guy in his early twenties who is trying to figure out who he is in a London neighborhood. Through his interactions with the people and places he frequents in several south London suburbs, Karim Amir delves into his formative years, from the ages of seventeen to twenty. Karim thinks it's important to note that these communities separated from central London by the Thames are also separated from the possible anonymity and global hustle of the metropolis. Karim and his father, the Indian Haroon Amir, go to a party in Beckenham, a little fancier than the unremarkable South London neighborhood of Bromley, where Karim grew up. Margaret Amir, Karim's mom, opts to remain in despite Haroon being the headline speaker. Despite Haroon's twenty years of London residency, he is still reliant on Karim for transportation to Beckenham. Karim moves in with his dad when his dad buys an apartment with Eva, Haroon's English lover. He leaves his mom and little brother in the suburbs. Karim and his new family have moved to a new place and are ready to start over. They want to leave behind a lot of different feelings and problems, such as racism, violence, being alone, and the need to change to fit in.

In the first section of the book, relationships between family members and close friends take center stage. Jamila is Karim's first female sexual relationship. Along with seeing the racism and snobbism of the suburbs, Karim also learns about the connection between racism and white privilege via his interactions with Helen's father and friendship with her. Her father's unabashed bigotry mirrors Helen's unbridled self-assurance. Uncle Ted and Aunt Jean, who are white and British, are ambivalent figures

in Karim's life. Unabashedly, they show equal affection for their mixed-race nephew and bigotry. Eva is an ambitious lady who is deeply involved in the arts. The bohemian Londoners are supposed to be enlightened by his guru-like appearances, which she is orchestrating. In traditional Muslim style, Jamila has agreed to be married off to Anwar, her oppressive father. Changez came to London as an Indian college student but is just as unaccustomed to hard labor as Haroon and Anwar. Karim's awareness is expanded by his interactions with white, working-class, and upper-middle-class individuals as he harmonizes in a multicultural society in London. He discovers political activity via the socialist inclinations and efforts of his buddy, Terry. He discovers feminist militancy via Jamila and socialism inside her community's way of life. He achieved a degree of success as an actor in London. Ultimately, it remains ambiguous if Karim has reconciled the complexities of his racial identity, yet he has a thorough understanding of it. The ambivalence of an individual with a mixed origin has been altered; his biracial identity.

The Buddha of Suburbia tackles the racial and ethnic identity crises plaguing modern Britain while also challenging the idea that a nation can be too homogeneous in its self-perception. The novel also offers a fresh perspective on culture, viewing it as the site of hybridity in an interconnected world. The concept of hybridity right here indicates that British identity is not uniform or basically described by means of a single race, ethnicity, or lifestyle. Therefore, Margarida Pereira states that the novel grapples with the concept of multiculturalism and the presence of multiple ethnic identities, especially in cutting-edge, numerous Britain. It reflects the complexity of residing in an international world in which migration, cultural exchange, and interactions between extraordinary groups bring about identities that can be layered and multifaceted (Pereira, 2014, p. 9). At the beginning of Kureishi's novel, Karim draws his situation as a "funny kind of Englishman, a new breed as it were, having emerged from two old histories" (Kureishi, 1990, Ch 1). Individuals who are considered to be part of a "new breed" have emerged as a result of the merging of several cultural traditions rather than being defined by a single set of past events.

The author, Hanif Kureishi, is characterized by the historicized conflict between the history of the colonizer and the colonized. Through his creative work, Kureishi studies and explores what it means to have a place in society, specifically a position within identity that is dependent on plurality rather than singularity. Kureishi was born in 1954 to an Asian father and a mother who was English (Yousaf, 2002, p. 7).

Furthermore, Kureishi's novel reveals the ironies inherent in our acknowledgment of Britain as a multicultural country and of Britons as racially varied and culturally heterogeneous individuals (p. 27). Kureishi explains how Britain's idea of itself as a mixed country is flawed. While British society sees itself as racially and culturally diverse, Kureishi's story shows ongoing social conflicts and limited inclusion, which is how she thinks this multiculturalism is most real. By showing these flaws, he judges how Britain superficially accepts variety.

According to Md Islam an immigrant father from India arrived in Britain in the 1950s, and Karim was born to an English mother in a London neighborhood. Except in the eyes of racist bigots, he is an Englishman. He freely admits that being English is an inherent part of his identity and not something he can choose. Islam also brought up Kureishi's book on maturing and forming one's individuality. Karim, whose father is an Indian Muslim, has spent his whole childhood in England acting more and more like an Englishman. His father raised him as an Englishman and never expressed a desire to return to India or expose his son to the customs of his home country. Thus, Karim's cultural orientation is not considered mixed (Islam, 2016, p. 360). In contrast, Shadwell makes his way over to Karim in order to announce his identity, saying "She's trying to protect you from your destiny, which is to be a half-caste in England. That must be complicated for you to accept belonging nowhere, wanted nowhere" (Kureishi, 1990, Ch 9). In this quote, Shadwell immediately breaks the news to Karim about his mixed-race status. By referring to Karim as a "half-caste," Shadwell highlights the fact that despite having both Indian and English ancestry, he does not fully fit into either society. He says that this complicates Karim's life further since, according to Shadwell, someone with a mixed background might feel as if they aren't completely normal to everyone else and aren't healthy anywhere. It depicts the isolation and struggle of people from exclusive cultural origins, particularly in a setting like England where navigating racial and ethnic identities may be particularly challenging.

There is a range of decentering in the lives of the novel's protagonists, and each one finds their own unique method to deal with it. Haroon, Karim's father, and the titular Buddha has opted to live in Britain rather than India in order to be as "Englishman" as possible. He has wed an English lady, maintains a relationship with an English mistress (Eva), and is raising his children to be English against the racism of his neighbors. But he also uses his Indian heritage to his advantage by posing as a guru "Buddha" to the

people of the South London suburbs, where he explains Eastern philosophy and religion. Both his ambition and his uncertainty about becoming English are intertwined. Reading self-help books on Eastern philosophy and practicing his speeches would let him approach the English audience as if he were an Eastern guru.

The novel *The Buddha of Suburbia* illustrates the perception of Britishness among both British natives and foreigners. Immigrants attempt to get acceptance from the British by emulating their behaviors and assimilating into their culture. Through this process, they have redefined the concept of Britishness. Consequently, it may be inferred that the notion of Britishness differs based on the immigrant viewpoint. This notion is a fallacy. There are instances when he perceives himself as superior to the British when in England. Due to his aristocratic heritage in India, Haroon cannot refrain from behaving like an Englishman, despite his internal sentiments (Kara, 2020, p. 183). This reflects Haroon's aristocratic background in India and how, despite being in England, humans regard him as someone of noble status, which impacts his own experience of superiority and Britishness. Haroon, in navigating between his Indian background and his choice to match into English society, embodies the fluid and mythic nature of British identification from the immigrant attitude. Hanif Kureishi has determined the events of *The Buddha of Suburbia* are set during the time when Margaret Thatcher, a conservative politician who strongly believed in keeping the purity of the British race, became lively and finally became the Prime Minister.

Kureishi uses mainstream British culture to highlight cultural identification and national belonging anxieties, especially for "Others" in the community. Karim views Britishness as an advantage in England, but he realizes its limits in other situations, such as America, where its value diminishes. His perspective shows Britishness as a socially constructed and narrow ideology that Thatcher cultivated to maintain a vision of purity and exclusivity. The notion of Britishness is an attempt by the British to assert their superiority over other nations by eliminating the Other from the definition of country. Karim, who was seen to be an "other," had the belief that being British in England was a privilege, but that being British in the United States did not have the same significance. In light of the fact that Karim is of English descent, his declaration of "the other" in the United States demonstrates how useless Thatcher's narrow-mindedness and Britishness are, and one of the most significant alterations inside the novel's framework of identity is really shown by Haroon (p. 185). Karim didn't see why his father, who had spent

years hoping to adopt a British child, suddenly made his Indian heritage so prominent. In Haroon, one's identity was changeable, this problem of identity fluidity is not exclusive to immigrant communities.

When the British women Eva and Margaret met Haroon, they both felt a profound impact of Indian culture on their own identities. In contrast to Thatcherite politics, Kureishi persuasively appears to demonstrate that no culture can be considered unique or pure. Moreover, Eva wants to raise Karim to be more English, so she introduces him to Ted Shadwell, a theater director, hoping this will help him fit in. But instead, Karim faces yet another identity crisis. He can't seem to find his place in society and feels out of place, not fully British but also distant from his Indian roots. Acting seems like the only profession where he can experiment with different identities, but even that becomes complicated. A key moment of "otherization" happens when Ted Shadwell offers Karim the role of Mowgli in a play. Rather than embracing Karim's individuality, Shadwell reduces him to a stereotype of an "exotic" Easterner, which reflects how the colonial mindset often views people from the East.

Shadwell doesn't see Karim as a person with a complex identity but rather as someone who can fulfill his idea of "authentic" Indian culture. Instead of giving Karim a costume that highlights Mowgli's wild side, Shadwell covers him in mud, symbolizing the dirtiness or primitiveness he associates with the East. The version of Mowgli that Shadwell creates isn't truly authentic, even though he claims it is. Shadwell's idea of authenticity is rooted in stereotypes a half-naked Indian character who speaks with an exaggerated accent. It's a shallow representation of what it means to be Indian, shaped by the West's limited understanding. This role is more about reinforcing Shadwell's own control over how he views the East, using Karim to fit into his narrow view of "oriental" culture. Ironically, Karim has spent much of his life trying to push away his Indian heritage, but now he's being cast specifically for his "Eastern authenticity," which leaves him stuck between two worlds, neither fully British nor fully Indian (pp. 186-194). Shadwell's cursory depiction of Karim's identity is a nuanced critique of the limited comprehension and simplistic preconceptions prevalent in British society about Indian culture. Shadwell used Karim to construct an authentic Indian representation, linking his role as Mowgli with a colonial perspective that perceives the East as both primitive and exceptional.

The Buddha of Suburbia shows how postcolonial agency challenges the Thatcherite view of national identity by showing how Britons, both native and foreign, are reimagining what it means to be British. According to Malik Khan and Ahmad Khan acceptance into English culture is difficult for Haroon since he is a member of the first-generation immigrant group. Though he endures much hardship on his way, he makes a substantial contribution to the ongoing effort to redefine Britishness. His noble Indian ancestry prevents him from feeling embarrassed by the colonizer's presence. Therefore, Haroon's direct experiences during the colonial period in India have influenced his viewpoint, resulting in his conviction that the English constitute a higher and revered racial group. Upon his arrival in England for educational purposes, he experiences disenchantment as he perceives the British public as unexceptional persons (Khan & Khan, 2023, p.1387). A sense of contentment and protection from colonial shame is instilled in Haroon by his aristocratic Indian background, yet he shows his true emotions by subjecting himself to the mundane British culture when he arrives for study. A reality that falls short of his ideals challenges his adoration for the British way of life, which was first influenced by colonial notions of superiority.

Haroon's story represents a strong challenge to the rigid Thatcher-era idea of Britishness, which firmly argues that being British is a privilege reserved only for those born into British heritage. As Malik Khan and Ahmad Khan refer to this narrow view excludes those who do not fit into the traditional mold of British identity. In contrast, Haroon fully embraces a blended identity, referring to himself confidently as a "brown-skinned Englishman." This identity is not only shaped by his heritage but also by his role as a civil servant, a position that requires him to commute from the suburbs into London regularly, symbolizing his participation in the very fabric of British society (p. 1388). Moreover, his identity is deeply intertwined with the values and norms of the English middle class, whose expectations influence how he sees himself and how he interacts with the world around him. This complex mix of cultural influences makes Haroon's sense of Britishness more layered and dynamic, challenging the idea that only those of pure British descent can truly be called British. Instead, Haroon embodies a modern, multicultural version of Britishness, one that is constantly evolving in a society that is far more diverse than the Thatcherite ideal.

This an idea Haroon adopts the persona of *the Buddha of Suburbia*, describing this identity as invented and highly hybrid. This suggests that Haroon's identity is a

carefully crafted blend of various cultural influences, making it both unique and complex as well. Barbara Wohlsein explores that by embracing this identity, Haroon can achieve two key goals at once. First, he finds a new sense of purpose in a profession that truly excites him, one that offers him personal satisfaction and a way to explore his passions. Second, he uses this constructed identity as a strategic tool to gain acceptance and integration within the white English society, which may otherwise be less open to someone of his background. This dual achievement is significant because it allows Haroon to simultaneously navigate two important aspects of his life. On the one hand, he secures his own sense of personal fulfillment by doing something he genuinely enjoys. On the other hand, he is able to position himself in a way that makes him more palatable to the broader white English community, allowing him to access social approval that might not be easily granted to someone with his cultural and ethnic background. In essence, Haroon's hybrid identity becomes a means of balancing the need for self-discovery with the desire for social belonging, illustrating the complex navigation of personal and social identity in a multicultural environment (Wohlsein, 2008. Cited from Khan & Khan, 2023, p. 1389). As a non-secular guide, Haroon's new role elevates his social standing and makes him more appealing to the English center group, who see him as a useful but unusual character. This deliberate combination of self-discovery and social adaptation highlights the intricate balance between character accomplishment and social acceptability in a multicultural setting.

According to Anwar, he breaks religious norms by drinking drinks that are not in line with Islamic teachings, when Kareem mentioned "Uncle Anwar didn't sleep at all now. At night he sat on the edge of his chair, smoking and drinking unislamic drinks and thinking" (Kureishi, 1990, Ch 14). This is because he has understood that adopting a Muslim identity does not provide a solution to the problems that he is facing. The way in which the characters of Haroon and Anwar are portrayed exemplifies the idea that identity is not a fixed trait but rather a concept that is malleable and subject to many interpretations. The process of integration that Haroon and Anwar went through is illustrative of the continual interaction that exists between the rooted and routed cultures, which eventually results in the altering of the concept of Britishness (Gilroy, 1996. Cited from Khan & Khan, 2023, p. 1391). Anwar's actions, characterized by his use of "unislamic drinks," reveal a defiance of the rigid religious and cultural norms that had previously molded his sense of self. This change, as Kareem notes, shows Anwar's

increasing disappointment with a completely Muslim identity as a solution to his difficult circumstances in Britain. Haroon and Anwar show how identity is constantly shaped by the constant juggling of one's cultural heritage with one's modern social milieu, as well as by the challenging and unchanging notions of Britishness. This malleability exemplifies the ways in which immigrants of the first century came to terms with their identities in the face of conflicting cultural norms.

A person's search for self-identification is intricately linked to their motion between reconnecting with their cultural and historical past and building a British identity. It is crucial to apprehend that identification isn't always a set or innate feature, no matter what one's efforts to solidify it. Rather, humans develop their actual experience of self through experimentation and new studies. Initially, each character adopts behaviors such as the ones of the British and completely immerses themselves in the British way of life (p. 1391). Eventually, they return to their earlier engagement with Eastern non secular traditions, Anwar aligning himself with Islam and Haroon with Buddhism, for example, when Kareem explains a mix of Eastern spiritual traditions about his father. "I ran and fetched Dad's preferred yoga book, Yoga for Women, with pictures of healthy women in black leotards from among his other books on Buddhism, Sufism, Confucianism, and Zen, which he had bought at the Oriental bookshop in Cecil Court" (Kureishi, 1990, Ch 1). However, it is vital to note that neither Anwar nor Haroon deeply identifies with someone precise spiritual machine. Instead, they perform these non-secular practices superficially, imitating the rituals and ceremonies without deep connection, rendering their movements greater than akin to creative expressions than true spiritual devotion.

Talking to someone about something you both like does double duty: it brings you closer together and makes you think about yourself, since you may see parts of yourself reflected in them. This kind of interaction enhances social cohesiveness and helps individuals develop a sense of belonging within a shared identity. Kareem describes his situation:

Changez and I passed a bottle between us. Big Muslim he was, drinking on the day of a funeral. It was only with these two that I felt part of a family. The three of us were bound together by ties stronger than personality, and stronger than the liking or disliking of each other. (Kureishi, 1990, Ch 14)

Therefore, Kath Woodward states that identification is defined both with the aid of our resemblance to folks who are like us and by using our distinction from folks who are not. It is shaped through shared cultural, social, or non-public developments that join us to a set, whilst additionally standing apart from others based totally on variations in values, studies, or backgrounds. This balance of belonging and differentiation is prime to how we apprehend ourselves and how we are perceived by using others. Beyond genuinely marking similarity or difference, identification shapes our sense of cause and location inside the globe, influencing how we navigate relationships, communities, and even large societal systems. In essence, identity is a complex mixture of each commonality and evaluation, evolving via interactions and contexts. Less comforting instances exist when the proper identification is not established; in such cases, one may be barred from accessing, among other things, credit or hire buy, pension or sickness benefits, entrance to a club or restaurant, or, more importantly, a nation. How can we identify those who are exactly like us, and what knowledge can we use to classify other people and ourselves? In the aforementioned cases, a symbol such as a badge, a team scarf, a newspaper, the language we speak, or maybe the clothing we wear often becomes really significant. Other times it is clear-cut. A badge is one unambiguous public declaration we associate with a certain organization. Though sometimes it is more subtle, symbols and images help to highlight the ways in which we share identities with certain individuals and set us apart from others (Woodward, 2004, p. 7). On the other hand, Kareem describes his situation when he came to Eva's home:

I laughed at this, but it made me think of where Charlie may have inherited some of his cruelty. When Eva had gone and I lay for the first time in the same house as Charlie and Eva and my father, I thought about the difference between the interesting people and the nice people. And how they can't always be identical. The interesting people you wanted to be with - their minds were unusual; you saw things freshly with them and all was not deadness and repetition. (Kureishi, 1990, Ch 7)

Karim's contrast between "interesting" and "quality" people highlights his changing identity, indicating his internal conflict between the allure of intellectual stimulation and the ethical consequences of cruelty. This concern suggests that identity is shaped not just by connections, but also by the intricacies of human interaction, with the pursuit of authenticity leading to ambiguity regarding moral ideals. Karim's curiosity about those who challenge rules reveals a deeper quest for self in a varied cultural milieu.

In a personal and spiritual way, Karim could not connect with British society. Karim is directly affected by his Indian background. On the other hand, he is culturally affected by how the English treat him unfairly and how they lie to him. The British's unfair treatment of Karim makes him feel angry, alone, and distant. Karim should get rid of his difficult situation by thinking about his English background and culture, even though his father, Haroon, is of Indian descent. The fact that he is happy with himself shows that he is only doing this to change his social situation. He has an identity problem when he moves from the suburbs to London, leaving behind all the norms and culture of the suburbs in search of a quieter life (Azeem et al., 2020, p. 162). As Karim says "I was as sycophantic towards Pyke as the others, but underneath I was sceptical and liked to keep my distance. I put this scepticism down to my South London origins" (Kurieshi, 1990, Ch 12). Moreover, the narrator, Karim, displays his mindset closer to Pyke, a theatre director. Although Karim, like others, acts sycophantically (flattering and deferential), he admits that he stays internally skeptical and keeps a distance. Karim attributes this skepticism to his upbringing in South London, suggesting that his working-elegance historical past makes him more wary of authority and much less willing to fully accept as true or idolize people like Pyke, who represent a special, more privileged global. Also, there is a tension between Karim's internal identification, formed by way of his roots, and the outside pressures to comply or suit in inside elite, inventive circles. It speaks about the novel's broader subject matters, including magnificence, identity, and the complexity of social mobility.

Legally, Karim is an Englishman born in England but at the same time, he does not feel English enough as he and the Indian part of his family face discrimination based purely on the color of their skin (Kanioková, 2019, p. 13). Therefore, Karim Amir felt bored about his mixing of identity, so he stated "perhaps it is the odd mixture of continents and blood, of here and there, of belonging and not, that makes me restless and easily bored. Or perhaps it was being brought up in the suburbs that did it" (Kurieshi, 1990, Ch 1). Likewise, Sabina Sedláková believes there are a number of circumstances that Karim Amir encounters that call into question his genuine national identification and place him in a position that demands him to either accept or reject his Indian heritage (Sedláková, 2018, p. 15). Karim is always torn between the decision of whether to select his English identity and give up his Indian identity, or whether to pick the other way around. Therefore, the idea of "belonging and now not" focuses on the duality that many

individuals with hybrid identities face being part of cultures but now not feeling familiar or comfortable in either. Karim's suburban upbringing, referred to as the give-up, adds some other layer of alienation, suggesting that the suburban environment doesn't provide the cultural richness or belonging he craves. Instead, it amplifies his experience of being among, disconnected from his British and South Asian identity.

Karim is neither of British nor Indian nationality. Karim's complexion renders him insufficiently British, and the cultural heritage inherited from his father further alienates him from British identity as well. According to Gökçen Kara these circumstances, Karim cannot be considered Indian since he has never visited India and has acquired his knowledge of Indian history via British literature. Hanif Kureishi primarily focuses on hybrid identities, using them as cultural constructs in his books. Kureishi divided the narrative into "Suburbs" and "the center of the city." Karim has experienced life in both suburban and urban environments. For example, when Karim was in the Suburbs and when he went to the city, he adapted more than before (Kara, 2020, p. 188). Karim has stated, "I knew it did me good to be reminded of how much I loathed the suburbs, and that I had to continue my journey into London and a new life, ensuring I got away from people and streets like this" (Kureishi, 1990, Ch 7). Karim's repudiation of the suburbs indicates a desire to escape an environment devoid of cultural significance or future prospects, compelling him to gravitate towards London, a representation of variety and self-reinvention.

Karim asserts that contemporary London is rife with racial prejudice and is multicultural, which engenders ambivalence within him. Through this important part, Karim wants to comprehend his identity; he engaged in the exploration of his personal and cultural self as he found resonance with it. Therefore, Muhammad Azeem et al refer that Karim elucidates this position by referencing the challenges of his personal and cultural identity, indicating a quest for conflict, activity, sexual pursuits, and any kind of mobility due to the absurdity, lethargy, and burdensome nature of his familial dynamics (Azeem et al., 2020, p. 162). Because of his upbringing in Britain, Karim talks and acts like an Englishman. For that reason, he claims to be an Englishman. He has never identified as Indian and is not fluent in Indian languages; he also has no desire to follow in his father's religious footsteps. The only thing that ties Karim to his Indian heritage is his love of spicy cuisine, traditional Indian clothing, and yoga. Because of this, Karim prefers to identify as an Englishman rather than an Indian. The display of

Indian ancestry goes against the grain of British culture; therefore, he finds it hard to believe. His mother also confirms that Karim is not Indian at all, when she said, “You weren’t in a loincloth as usual,” she said. ‘At least they let you wear your own clothes. But you’re not an Indian. You’ve never been to India” (Kureshi, 1990, Ch 15). Karim has created a fractured identity via his willingness to fit into the British way of life; his fragile link to his Indian past is evident in his culinary and yoga preferences. Similarly, Karim’s mother’s comment highlights this disconnection by highlighting how his cultural identity is molded by his experiences in England rather than by his genuine Indian ancestry.

Allie, Karim’s brother, urges people around him to be equal when he said “let me say that we come from privilege. We can’t pretend we’re some kind of shitted-on oppressed people. Let’s just make the best of ourselves” (Ch 18). Allie appears to possess a greater capacity to comprehend and navigate his multifaceted allegiances and hyphenated identity. Allie advocates for a thoughtful examination of his identity and culture, embracing both connection and separation simultaneously. Md Islam refers to where Allie contends that individuals of African descent globally do not possess a uniform experience. Allie posits that possessing a hyphenated identity does not inherently grant an individual the right to assert claims regarding a history they have not directly encountered. He posits that individuals of African descent in Britain ought to refrain from self-pity and instead contemplate ways to assert their identity as British citizens while embracing their distinctiveness (Islam, 2016, p. 363). Allie is very different from his second-generation immigrant peers, and he pointed out that the basic concept of cultural identity is to develop from a multicultural, because he became an integral part of it. He advocates for the development of cultural identity through the breadth of his cultural mind and can be described as critical multiculturalism. Moreover, Kenneth Kaleta gives his opinion by saying that:

At the root of his English storytelling ... Hanif Kureishi suggests that the dogma of nationalism is in conflict with the reality of today’s multicultural England. He demands that we accept the inherent contradictions of a pluralistic society within England. Contemporary English society is a paradox of overlapping communities, and told from his Anglo-Asian perspective, his stories proclaim that as individuals reinvent their identities, so too must nations. (Kaleta, 2010, p. 3)

There is a deep tension between Anwar, a primary-era immigrant who embodies a greater conservative and patriarchal identification, and his daughter Jamila, a consultant of the second-era immigrant. This conflict highlights the generational divide in how identification and cultural values are navigated inside immigrant households. Anwar, grappling with the overt racism and discriminatory attitudes of the British society symbolizing the dominant host way of life retreats further into his traditionalist beliefs. To assert, manage, and maintain his cultural roots, Anwar insists that Jamila enter an arranged marriage with Changez, a person from India. “Anwar had told Jamila what he’d decided: she was to marry the Indian and he would come over, slip on his overcoat and wife and live happily ever after in her muscly arms” (Kurieshi, 1990, Ch 7). This clash between Anwar’s desire to uphold the traditions of the antique world and Jamila’s craving for autonomy and self-willpower displays the wider struggles of immigrant families attempting to balance their history with the pressures of assimilating into British society. This generational battle isn’t pretty much a circle of relatives’ dynamics’ however, it is likewise symbolic of the bigger identification disaster faced by immigrants looking to reconcile themselves beyond the existing in an ever-evolving multicultural England (Kara, 2020, p. 190). For the sake of her mother, Jeeta, Jamila decides to marry Changez, but her libertarian and confrontational attitude throughout her marriage serves as a constant rebellion against her father and the colonial views. Racially and culturally motivated others are shown by the events that Anwar and Jamila go through.

The fact that Jamila is culturally different is not something she gives much thought to. Fighting for her rights in England, she pays little attention to her ethnic identity. She is less concerned with radical ideas on identity and more interested in politics, her current social standing, and independence. According to Muhammad Azeem et al., an identity crisis, in her view, is a universal problem in a world where people may do as they choose. That is why, instead of giving in to her parents’ expectations, she wished to marry for the sake of her own happiness. Unlike the second generation of immigrants, Jamila is more open-minded and actively embraces the old English traditions (Azeem et al., 2020, p. 163)., Karim mentioned typical of Jamila in her London life:

I kept thinking to myself, Typical Jamila, that’s exactly what she would do, as if this were something that happened every day. But she was marrying Changez out of

perversity, I was sure of it. We lived in rebellious and unconventional times, after all. And Jamila was interested in anarchists and situationists and Weathermen and cut all that stuff out of the papers and showed it to me. (Kurieshi, 1990, Ch 6)

As an example of the identity struggles second-generation refugees face, Jamila's life shows how she rejected her father's expectations and cultural conservatism. Her decision to marry Changez shows a difficult response to common beliefs since marriage does not now mean agreeing with her father's beliefs. Instead, Jamila makes her own personality contrast to what her parents want her to be. She adheres to values shaped by her British education while also staying away from traditional values. From her point of view, the age gap that often exists in immigrant families is brought to light. The children of immigrants have to deal with a complex cultural environment that is shaped by the society they are born into.

3.1. The Language

Hanif Kureishi employs language as a tool to explore the intricacies of postcolonial identification in *The Buddha of Suburbia*, particularly through the narratives of Immigrant Karim from the second period. Karim's liminality is illustrated by the novel's linguistic hybridity, which combines British colloquialism with elements of South Asian vernacular. As Susheila Nasta demonstrates, this nuanced use of language embodies the transgressive power of a multicultural Britain, in which traditional notions of Britishness are perpetually under negotiation (Nasta, 2000, p.45). This narrative serves as a testament to both resistance and compliance with British cultural conventions.

In Homi Bhabha's "Third Space," where identity is built via negotiation techniques rather than continuous definitions, the use of a hybridized language by Kureishi finds resonance (Bhabha, 1994, p. 37). Like his ever-changing sense of identity, Karim's vocabulary veers between being completely British and being completely rooted in his South Asian heritage. Sara Upstone elaborates by stating that the radical's use of a mix of British and Other languages creates a narrative space that rejects the binary nature of British and Other (Upstone, 2013, p. 112). For Bhabha, "Third Space" is not only a cultural but also a linguistic assembly; it is here that Kureishi's characters, and Karim in particular, live and speak. As he struggles to find a way to reconcile his

competing cultural identities, Karim's storytelling style alternates between South Asian historical tones and British colloquialisms. His language reveals both the concessions he must make and the sarcastic detachment he maintains in his dealings with British culture. Hybridity and cultural negotiation are essential to the immigrant experience, and Kureishi's language embodies these ambiguities.

The novel's language may also be examined via Mikhail Bakhtin's notion of *heteroglossia*, which posits the coexistence of many voices inside a single narrative, offering diverse perspectives and registers. Kureishi's use of heteroglossia language creates a fractured, multifaceted reality in which Karim's identity is shaped not in isolation but via the cacophony of surrounding voices that signify both belonging and estrangement. James Procter recognizes this as a characteristic of Kureishi's narrative technique, noting that the novel's polyphonic structure facilitates a crucial dialogue across cultural discourses, revealing the fluidity of racial and social identities (Procter, 2003, p. 83). By amplifying many perspectives within British society, multivocality challenges the essentialism of British cultural identity. Karim's voice, which is full of sarcasm and disrespect, challenges the prevailing cultural standards and undermines the stability of fixed ideas of belonging and identity. By giving Karim a voice, Kureishi challenges the static concept of "Britishness" and shows how multicultural Britain is fraught with conflict.

Funny and ironic language are big parts of Kureishi's writing, which he uses to criticize how "extraordinary" identities are turned into commodities and how hard it is to fit in. Elleke Boehmer outlined how irony is used as a form of resistance in postcolonial writing, pointing out that it shows the flaws in colonial speech and gives reclaimed business activity to voices that have been ignored (Boehmer, 2005, p. 190). Karim's humor in *The Buddha of Suburbia* shows how he has both adapted to and grown apart from British culture. Because of the comedy in his voice, he can criticize British class and race relations without fully agreeing with them. Kureishi's humor serves not just as a protection mechanism for Karim but also as a narrative technique to expose the folly of British assumptions about Asian immigration. Karim's amusing commentary on his father's aspirations to become a "Buddha" also critiques the British fetishization of Eastern mysticism. This humorous insight demonstrates how Karim's language serves as a kind of resistance, enabling him to maneuver inside British culture while maintaining a crucial detachment from its beliefs. For example, Karim said, "I sent up

the accent and made the audience laugh by suddenly relapsing into cockney at odd times” (Kureishi, 1990, Ch 10). In this humorous way, Karim demonstrates the paradox of his situation: he is assimilating into British society while also criticizing it from a distance.

Kureishi employs many conversations brimming with colloquialism to highlight the disparity between the upper-middle-class “Eleanor” and suburban ‘Haroon and his son Karim’ languages. All things considered, the book reads like an oral conversation, giving the reader the sense that what they are reading is really happening. One way to look at the book’s structure is as a Bildungsroman chronicling Karim’s journey from childhood to the actor (Cornea, 2010, p. 9). Kureishi utilizes an oral, conversational style in developing characters such as Karim, enhancing the sense of reality. This strategy allows readers to feel engaged in Karim’s environment as if eavesdropping on authentic exchanges. James claims that as Karim develops and adjusts his speech to unique social circumstances, this technique gives the story linguistic authenticity and an air of immediacy that fits the Bildungsroman structure of the unusual (Procter, 2003, p. 85). The multiethnic and socioeconomic diversity of Britain in the 1970s is vividly shown in Kureishi’s writing, which Elleke Boehme refers to reflects the country’s complicated and sometimes contradictory social fabric (Boehmer, 2005, p. 192). Kureishi used colloquialism to give his portrayal of concrete and suburban Britain’s reality and richness; the language in *The Buddha of Suburbia* reflects the characters’ origins and the social boundaries they negotiate. When compared to the formal, concise language used by characters from the upper middle class, such as Eleanor and Pyke, the conversation between Karim and Haroon is rife with the colloquialisms typical of suburban life. Subtly highlighting the difficulties Karim has in trying to cross these barriers, this language difference emphasizes the cultural capital gap between the two societies.

3.2. The Role of Performance and Mimicry in Identity Formation

Hanif Kureishi delves into the identity development of crucial individuals, notably Haroon and his son Karim, via mimicry in *The Buddha of Suburbia*. In Homi Bhabha’s view, this mimicry comprises the equivocal way in which the colonial situation mimics the colonizer, leading to a “double vision” that is both subverting and complying with colonial power (Bhabha, 1994, p. 86). In a postwar British culture that

persists in imposing orientalist prejudices upon people of South Asian heritage, Kureishi's protagonists use imitation as a means of negotiating their identities. Kureishi is able to criticize the multicultural Britain that exists because both Haroon and Karim manage their social statuses by assuming roles that satisfy or fulfill British expectations. Characters are constrained inside restricting, racist frames, as seen by this intricate dynamic of imitation, which occurs even when the act provides positive freedoms.

This conflicted mimicry is on full display in Haroon's decision to pose as a self-styled "Buddha" for the benefit of a British suburban audience. Even though Haroon had been a well-educated man in India, his skills are disregarded in Britain, where he serves in a lowly government position. To appeal to the unique spiritual desires of middle-class Britons, he assumes the role of a "guru" while feigning an archetypal "Oriental" aesthetic. According to Andrei Nae, this is an example of "self-orientalization," in which the protagonist Haroon uses the preconceptions held by his intended audience for his own private gain (Nae, 2014, p. 36). Not only does Haroon gain social status by assuming this inflated character, but his performance critiques the superficial interest in Eastern mysticism in British culture, which is enjoyed as a spectacular show devoid of cultural authenticity.

Attempting to find a balance between his Indian and British heritages, second-generation immigrant Karim when said, "The immigrant is the Everyman of the twentieth century" (Kureishi, 1990, Ch 9), which displays an extraordinary kind of mimicry. Aware of the ways cultural norms impact identification views, he often adapts his identity, accessories, and mannerisms to fit different social settings. Elleke Boehmer argues that Karim's mimicry is symbolic of the difficulties faced by immigrants who arrived in a new country with a weak cultural foundation and who, instead, must constantly adjust to the expectations of the dominant culture while also dealing with their own history (Boehmer, 2005, p. 111). Karim's ability to manage British society's obsession with "ethnic" characters playing stereotyped "Indian" roles despite his inner pain exemplifies this complexity. While mimicking might provide doors to better economic and social situations, it can also drive Karim into false personas that are not authentic to who he is.

Kureishi adds another layer of complexity to the imitation theme by showing how the characters, Haroon and Karim, experience dislocation and fragmentation

because of their performances. While Haroon's guru character wins over his British friends, it creates a wedge between him and his wife, who finds his behavior insincere and even demeaning. The psychological cost of adopting a false identity to benefit one's reputation is therefore highlighted by Haroon's mimicry, which comes at a personal cost. Saman Dizayi argues that the postcolonial experience necessitates self-sacrifice to live up to the expectations of one's former conquerors, a phenomenon she calls the mental residue of colonialism (Dizayi, 2019, p. 85). This upheaval embraces how imitation, instead of relieving the postcolonial issue, often exacerbates their internal struggles, ensnaring individuals in their "performances" of self-identification.

Meanwhile, Kureishi offers a nuanced perspective on racial prejudice in British culture via Karim's imitation. Karim is forced to face the reality that his mixed heritage does not conform to British expectations of ethnic genuineness as he navigates the theater industry, where he is encouraged to adopt an "authentic" Indian persona. Karim is encouraged to showcase his Indian heritage in an audition scenario, even though he feels distant from his family's culture. Here Kureishi shows the limitations of mimicry by showing how Karim's identity is neither wholly British nor Indian, which annoys society's attempts to classify him. According to Agnieszka Stanecka, racial stereotypes are still very much present in multicultural Britain, and postcolonial subjects are nevertheless compelled to "perform" identities that the colonial gaze imposes on them (Stanecka, 2009, p. 59).

Kureishi offers a nuanced examination of the formation of identity in a postcolonial context, emphasizing the dichotomy that arises as individuals navigate between the pressures of their cutting-edge environment and the cultural values they have inherited. Kureishi emphasizes the concept of "voluntary mimicry," which in postcolonial theory encapsulates the ambivalent position of individuals who, by imitating the dominant tradition, are concurrently pursuing attractiveness and distancing themselves from their origins through imitation. This mimicry, although intended to facilitate integration, ultimately induces an internal schism a phenomenon that Homi Bhabha may refer to as the "partial presence" that fluctuates between assimilation and lifestyle, resulting in an inauthenticity that compromises each identity. As Agnieszka Stanecka states, "In Kureishi's postcolonial world duality of perception is evoked often by voluntary mimicry, which consequently creates an artificial split between traditional, heritage-oriented upbringing, and demanding surroundings" (p. 64). This synthetic split

is shown in Kureishi's characters through tension. For example, Haroon's tries to be British show how his background and the needs of his surroundings are at odds with each other. Trying to fit in with social norms by acting and speaking like a British person is part of his trying to cope, but it also makes him feel disconnected from his own culture. When people in a postcolonial setting use this complicated method of self-fashioning, they create a multilayered identity that is shaped by the past and forced to live in two different ways. As a result, Kureishi's writing makes us think deeply about how postcolonial issues must change by copying dominant norms, which leads to a broken sense of self that shows how hard it is to be a cultural mix.



4. A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF HYBRIDITY IN *WHITE TEETH* AND *THE BUDDHA OF SUBURBIA*

An almost entirely white social environment gave way in the years immediately following WWII, from 1945 until the late 1950s, to a new British society defined by the presence of citizens of other diverse ethnicities, primarily those from ex-colonial territories. Thus, there are some who have seen writers from various racial origins and, thus, their work as contributing to “Black British Literature.” Even within the context of British literature, they remain classified by ethnicity. Smith and Kureishi’s works have been analyzed through the lens of their writers’ ethnic distinctiveness and the narratives of their novels or examined in the context of colonial and postcolonial dynamics (Fernández, 2009, p. 145). These two novels reevaluate the myths of empire and draw an unknown or elusive map of immigrant history. These novels also convey to us the natural scene in Britain step by step, which laid the foundations of a new reality for the coming hybrid generations, especially the second generation. Kathleen Vickers believes beginning with Britain’s patriotic apprehension of hybridity in the 1950s, the literary works illustrate the progression of how colonial immigrants sought acceptance as British citizens. Britain has evolved to see hybridity as having significant potential and acknowledges the substantial contribution of black and Asian populations as essential components of British society (Vickers, 2009, p. 84). *White Teeth* and *The Buddha of Suburbia* are postcolonial tales that highlight a historical and cultural transition in Britain, where there is a contradiction between the country’s embrace of diversity and its patriotic dread of hybridity. A lot of people were worried about losing their “Britishness” and their identities as they flooded into Britain in the 1950s and 1960s, especially from places that had been colonies. In contrast, writers such as Zadie Smith and Hanif Kureishi started to present hybridity as a positive and unavoidable part of British culture towards the end of the twentieth century.

Furthermore, these novels above highlight personal identity as a crucial subject in philosophical, psychological, and sociological discussions, often seen as the foundation for how individuals traverse the world and choose their place within it. It is usually accepted that identity is molded now not only via one’s inner self-concept but also by other variables, consisting of social opinions and interactions. The dispute continues about the extent to which identity is biologically predetermined or socially

formed. As Heidi Reppen suggests, a person's sense of self is their own identity. It probably depends on our perception of ourselves as well as, to some degree, how other people see us. Furthermore, it most likely includes both manufactured and innate, genetically driven features. There is disagreement about how much these two characteristics contribute to who we are (Reppen, 2023, p. 3). Also, "identity is a lifelong process that is always in a matter of constant change depending on the social context giving rise to a new entity" (Harrache & Siham, 2020, p. 30). Oda Longvastøl Øverbø thinks that identity is viewed as something that keeps growing as it interacts with various spaces, like history and the past, which can then become a part of the characters' interconnected identity (Longvastøl Øverbø, 2017, p. 4). So, the past is not just a fixed thing; it actively connects with the present, creating a layered and intertwined sense of identity.

Both *White Teeth* by Zadie Smith and *The Buddha of Suburbia* by Hanif Kureishi deal thoroughly with issues of identity and belonging, particularly in the context of immigrant studies in Britain. Smith's *White Teeth* digs into intergenerational identity problems, examining how characters such as Irie Jones and Millat Iqbal struggle with their British and ancestral identities, often feeling the pull of their cultural historical past in a culture that labels them as "Other." Similarly, Kureishi's novel with protagonist Karim represents the conflict between his British upbringing and South Asian origin, negotiating his outsider" position in many social circumstances. Scholars have noted that such depictions underscore the concept that identity in a postcolonial environment is shaped by both external social expectations and internal cultural links.

It tries to get away from the idea that people are either inside or outside of British identity in *White Teeth* by looking more into the effects of multicultural interaction and showing how the three families were equally destabilized and dislocated in London after their interactions. This way, they can negotiate their identity status and show how they live their daily lives in more than one place. Smith is very positive about how to deal with racial issues in this kind of situation (Pérez Fernández, 2009, p. 148). Smith's novels serve as a ray of light, demonstrating that unity can be found in variety and that by sharing our stories and experiences, we can form relationships that transcend cultural differences. This is a beacon of hope, as we live in a world that is characterized by conflict and division, Smith's work serves to remind us of the power of empathy, understanding, and mutual respect in the process of establishing a society that is more

inclusive and harmonious, where the voices of all individuals are cherished and heard (Chaturvedi & Dhand, 2024, p. 1795). By presenting diversity in London as a force that both destabilizes and develops ties, Smith critiques binary conceptions of British identity. The Iqbal, Chalfen, and Jones families demonstrate the intricacies of postcolonial identity via their joy in displacement while also being compelled to conform to their common metropolitan setting. The city of London is seen as a “touch zone or microcosm of multiculturalism” where people from different generations, backgrounds, and cultures come together to form hybrid self-definitions via the projection of strict identification classifications. Despite the many conflicts that exist in cities, Smith has a positive view of them, seeing them as spaces for negotiation and shared humanity. In the end, the three families appear as new, interactive multicultural.

In terms of hybrid identities, it is quite evident that Archie’s identity is not one of them, especially when we take into consideration his heritage and culture. On the other hand, if we take into consideration the fact that he is married, it will seem that he is, to a certain extent, removed from the group of “white” English people. His coworkers and other members of his family and friends refer to him as having some type of mixed identity (Reppen, 2023, p. 12). There is no intrinsic hybridity in Archie’s origin and lifestyle as a white Englishman. But this becomes more complicated when he marries into a family with a unique background “Archie shows no interest in his or Clara’s heritages and therefore shares nothing with Irie about British or Jamaican nationality” (Helman, 2014, pp. 58-59). Archie finds himself in a place where his identity is being socially reinterpreted. Furthermore, the manner in which Archie interacts with Samad is indicative of the regard that he feels for him, the type of respect that the colonizer has for the colonizer. Because he is a hybrid, Archie cannot be interpreted as a normal Englishman or as anything else.

Archie is the antithesis of the concept of “masculinity” as it was defined by England’s colonial empire, as stated by Taryn Beukema, who claims that Archie Jones is a native Englishman who was born and raised in England. Surprisingly, it is Archie, and not Samad, who demonstrates features of the Englishman who is not quite white. Archie is the personification of a lack of a sense of direction and uncertainty (Beukema, 2008, p. 4). Traditional colonial notions of English masculinity emphasizing power, decisiveness, and strength are undermined by Archie. Ironically, for an Englishman who was “born and bred” in the country, his aimlessness and lack of a sense of belonging

bring him closer to the characteristics of the colonized “other” than the colonizer. The colonial identity binary is questioned by having Archie play the role of the “not-quite-not-white” character instead of Samad. Furthermore, there is an implicit, shared human conviction that Smith referred to, especially through the character of Archie, which is that everyone, biologically and culturally, has become post-colonial hybrids, and the search for pure origins is something impossible to achieve. As Jacques Derrida points out the existence of pure cultures is almost impossible: “Self-relation produces culture; but there is no culture without a relation to the other. No culture has a single origin: it is the very nature of culture to explore difference and to develop a systematic openness toward others within one’s culture as well as in other cultures” (Derrida, 1992, p. 8).

The Chalfen family stands tall as the very embodiment of British virtue: a fair-skinned, middle-class, well-versed in the ways of the world. The Chalfens’ portrayal hints that they have taken to heart the notion of Britishness and the sense of belonging like a cowboy to his saddle (Pérez Fernández, 2009, p. 147). White, middle-class, and educated, the Chalfen family exemplifies cultural privilege and social belonging and is the prototypical British. Internalized ideas of national identity linked to colonial hierarchies of sophistication and race inform their sense of self. Smith expresses his views on the exclusiveness of British identity via the Chalfens, revealing how it is built and how it isolates those who are considered “other.”

On the other hand, Irie’s lack of reflection in England’s “gigantic mirror” represents her loneliness and fractured identity as a multiracial person. England’s monolithic image excludes her, depicting her as a foreigner in a strange place and emphasizing the marginalization of individuals who question conventional ideals of Britishness “there was England, a gigantic mirror, and there was Irie, without reflection. A stranger in a stranger land” (Smith, 2000, Ch 9). Through her search for her family’s roots, Irie highlights the instability within the Jones family. To understand the relevance of her mixed heritage, Irie needs a whole family tree, genealogy, and some roots; she has no black role models other than her mother. Elaine Helman believes that “Clara disconnects from her past life and history by never speaking of either. Clara strives to lose her Jamaican accent and raises Irie to be as English as possible” (Helman, 2014, p. 58). This quotation has outlined that Clara’s rejection of her Jamaican roots, shown by her failure to talk about her past and her efforts to get rid of her accent, shows how much pressure there is to fit in with British society. This silence means that she does not want

to talk about her roots because she wants to protect herself and her daughter Irie from racism in multiracial Britain. But this removal creates a gap between generations, as Irie fights with who she is and wants to connect with a legacy that Clara has purposely kept secret.

The novel sets up an incomplete family tree, and the protagonist Irie's mother's disregard for her granddaughter Hortense Bowden's connection makes it hard for Irie to feel like she has any extended relatives (Pérez Fernández, 2009, p. 150). Because of her identity crisis, Irie has a hard time settling down and finding a feeling of belonging. Her estrangement from her ancestry is underscored by the incomplete family tree and the lack of any Black references other than her mother. This highlights the cultural and generational divides that exist throughout diasporic households. According to Harrache Harrache and Mounira Siham refer that both Hortense and her granddaughter Irie, who has Jamaican and English ancestry, are living instances of this shift in hybridity. While Hortense's mother, a Jamaican, was raped by an Englishman during her pregnancy and subsequently chose a black identity, rejecting any trace of her English heritage (Harrache & Siham, 2020, pp. 88-89). Hortense and Irie represent distinct methodologies of hybridity. Hortense, the product of a tumultuous relationship between her Jamaican mother and an English father, repudiates her English heritage and fully adopts a black identity. Her rejection stands in stark contrast to Irie's endeavor to reconcile her bicultural identity.

The challenges of resolving family disagreements are greatly impacted by the Iqbal's ethnicity. On many occasions, Samad confronts his children, urging them to follow his demands in order to preserve their family heritage and adopt his identity. Like other immigrants influenced by the prevailing culture, he confesses he has failed to teach his boys the Islamic way of life (pp. 88-89). Heidi Reppen asserts that the majority of hybrid identities are manufactured, emerging via the individual's ongoing process of identity formation and reformation. Nonetheless, with children of mixed race, their hybridity is also related to essentialism, or genetic components, of identity (Reppen, 2023, p. 5). Children with mixed racial heritage also encounter hybridity in an essentialist sense, based on their genetic composition, in contrast to most hybrid identities that are constructed via continuous interpersonal and societal interactions. This two-pronged approach highlights how identity is shaped by a complex interaction between social construction and biological heredity.

Magid and Millat possess favorable possibilities for establishing their identities in alignment with both aspects of their background, despite their ongoing struggles at an early age. Young immigrant generations struggle with identity and want to distance themselves from their ancestral origins and past. They diverge from their own interests. The immigrants fear their distinct culture and those who are apprehensive about being seen as inferior. They seek to establish their identity within their community, caught between embracing or repudiating their parents' traditions. The personalities of Magid and Millat are shaped by the British cultures they encounter in their daily lives. Despite their conflict, Samad compels them to preserve a connection to his indigenous cultural traditions (Harrache & Siham, 2020, p. 89). Magid and Millat's mixed origin enables them to possibly reconcile both aspects of their identities, albeit their challenges. The younger generation of immigrants contends with the want to sever family ties while managing the cultural expectations dictated by their origin and British culture. Samad, their father, intensifies this struggle by demanding they conform to his cultural traditions, thus hindering their identity development.

According to Alsana, she comes to terms with the fact that their ethnic specifics serve as a unifying factor in a mostly white setting, allowing them and their children to feel at home in this small world (London) (Pérez Fernández, 2009, p. 148). Alsana's insight underscores how ethnic particularities among immigrants in London serve as a foundation for togetherness and identity. These communal cultural characteristics differentiate them within a mostly white context, generating a feeling of familiarity and belonging, especially for their offspring. This shared identity fosters a feeling of (home) amid the expansive and varied metropolis of London, underscoring the significance of cultural continuity and communal support in maneuvering through and adjusting to a heterogeneous metropolitan environment.

On the other hand, in the opening of *White Teeth*, Smith mentioned (What's past is prologue), this phrase stresses how the past continues to have an influence on the present. This Shakespearean allusion from *The Tempest* implies that personal and community history influences contemporary identities and relationships. The term emerges as the individuals' lives are significantly touched by ancestral legacies and colonial histories, and how the past sets the scene for continuous conflicts with identity and belonging as well. According to Irene Pérez Fernández, Smith's novel seeks to mainstream and justify such experiences as a part of everyday life in Britain, in addition

to documenting what may have been the lives of Smith's (generation) of ethnically mixed people in London. By creating a genealogy of British society that stretches back to the British colonial era and reveals, particularly in the case of Hortense Bowden's life, the history of British colonial rule and postcolonial policy (p.146). Therefore, Smith shows how colonial and postwar policies still affect modern British society by looking at lines that go back to the colonial era, especially through the character of Hortense Bowden.

Samad's struggle with hybridity arises from his difficulty in reconciling his profound connection to the transcendent with his current existence in London. His obsession with (lifeblood) and ancestral domains creates a cognitive barrier, hindering his complete adaptation to the multicultural and hybrid milieu of his suburban community. As Heidi Reppen clarifies "Not surprisingly, Samad is the one who struggles the most in coming to terms with hybridity and living 'in-between', as 'blood', the past and past spaces interfere with his belonging in the London suburb" (Reppen, 2023, p. 9). In addition, Samad's psychological struggles to find identity in the diaspora are laid bare in his speaking with Archie throughout the war, in which he often alludes to Pande. Samad's inability to completely embrace his new reality in London is a result of the interplay between his ties to Bengal and his respect for the past, which are symbols of the colonial past, and his own nostalgia as well. According to Heidi Reppen, Samad creates a fictitious representation of Bengal as a historical context to provide a stable, immutable foundation for his identity among the variety and change of life in a foreign nation. His trust in religion is likely similarly regarded to maintain his culture amid rising plurality (p. 15). Mickey's allusion when he said, "the golden days of Luncheon Vouchers" (Smith, 2000, Ch 10). demonstrates how individual and societal history are entwined. Archie's usage of those coupons links him to the bar, illustrating how everyday customs and rituals bind individuals to a common cultural story.

On the other hand, in Kureishi's *The Buddha of Suburbia*, Hybrid identities in postwar Britain are so complicated, as Karim's mingled past shows, created by two cultures: an English mother and an Indian father so Karim shows no signs of having a forced or dominating identity as he navigates the cultural realms. The complexities of multiracial identity formation in a country shaped by both colonialism and diversity are mirrored in this painful ambiguity. From this point, Kureishi indicates how cultural hybridity defies set categories by using Karim's pleasure to delve into the flexibility of

hybrid identity. As Elisa Mentu offers, the child of Indian and English parents does not automatically have a strong sense of ethnic identity, particularly in a situation where neither of his parents' cultures has been coerced or given greater prominence as in Karim's situation (Mentu, 2012, p. 46). Karim's ethnic identity appears to hold significance and intrigue for those unfamiliar with him. He is perceived as a distinctive figure, representing the concept of an Indian (p. 52). Therefore, Karim's ethnic identity is often exoticized by individuals interacting with him, reducing him to a mere representation of Indianness instead of recognizing his intricate personal identity. This objectification illustrates society's tendency to reduce and fetishize heterogeneous identities, disregarding the individual complexities involved in this society. Mr. Shadwell's comment about Karim being seen as a stranger "Everyone looks at you, I'm sure, and thinks: an Indian boy, how exotic, how interesting" (Kureishi, 1990, Ch 9) he exemplifies the Orientalist stereotype experienced by ethnic minorities in Britain and, Karim's identity is reduced to a superficial curiosity, with his race being a spectacle for others rather than an integral part of his personality.

Karim has dual identities and is torn between his two ethnic backgrounds. As Second Module & British English state, interestingly, Karim does not entirely recognize his half-breed status since he considers and identifies himself as an Englishman who does not always connect with the Indian origins he got from an Indian father. This is clearly shown in the initial section of the narrative when Karim reveals that he does not understand Urdu and has never visited India (Second & English, 2016, p. 8). Karim's split identity and his perception of himself as primarily English despite his Indian roots reflect the complexities of cultural hybridity and identity formation in a postcolonial context. As a protagonist navigating his dual heritage, Karim's lack of connection to his Indian roots, such as not speaking Urdu or visiting India, shows his alienation from his father's culture. Scholars like Homi Bhabha suggest that this in-betweenness creates a "third space," where identity is shaped through negotiation rather than static binaries. Karim's struggle embodies this hybridity, as he both resists and mimics cultural expectations.

Racist assaults are, therefore, more or less commonplace for Karim, making the exoticism of his look difficult for him to comprehend. Karim claims to be an Englishman who wishes to integrate into the English community (Mentu, 2012, p. 53). Although Karim claims his English identity, he experiences daily racial discrimination, resulting

in a conflict between his self-image and societal perceptions. As Haman believes, “hybridity was a term of abuse, signifying the lowest possible form of human life” (Hoogvelt, 2001, p. 170). Because of its negative connotations associated with racial mixing, the word “hybridity” has a long history of negative connotations, most notably in colonial settings. However, Karim’s endeavor to assimilate starkly contrasts with the exoticism thrust upon him, illustrating the psychological burden of being marginalized. Bhabha contends that feelings of ambivalence emerge from postcolonial hybridity, when people such as Karim inhabit a liminal area, being both inside and outside the dominant culture. This situation opposes the singular concepts of identity and belonging.

Karim lives figuratively in dual realms owing to his hybrid nature, which sometimes compels him to pursue assimilation and mimicry, but at other times incites an inner rage that drives him to distance himself from friends and engage in sexual encounters as an act of vengeance. The episode featuring Hairy Back may be shown humorously. Nevertheless, it subtly influences Karim, as the revenge-driven sexual attitude indicates his response to some insulting remarks, resulting in an inward transformation. He eventually recognizes that his external peculiarities hold more significance to the surrounding community than his inside characteristics (Second & English, 2016, p. 13). Jamila addresses an intriguing aspect by interpreting Karim’s performance as one of victimization. Initially, this assessment seems accurate, as Karim confesses to feeling humiliated by the Indian accent he has been compelled to imitate throughout the presentation (p.15). Therefore, it refers to Jamila’s critique of Karim’s “victimized” performance underscores his internal shame, particularly regarding racial mimicry. This reflects Bhabha’s notion of mimicry as a “menace”.

According to Haroon, he lived in London for about twenty years, where he had to find a way to reconcile his dual identities as an Indian and a Britisher. In this new profession, he also found a way to stop hiding his heritage. His ethnicity is not going away since he no longer imitates the English. When compared to Haroon, the other Indian characters in the book are much less likely to want to blend in with British culture by hiding their heritage (Mentu, 2012, p. 60). Both Haroon and Anwar have hidden their ethnicity and integrated into British culture; nonetheless, they are now experiencing a growing desire to show their cultural heritage, although in very different ways. Because of their abrupt and seemingly unnatural behavioral shifts, which they deny happening naturally, the ethnicity of these two characters comes off as a performance. It is because

of this that their behavior seems to be contrived not innate (p. 63). The transitions made by Haroon and Anwar from assimilation to cultural expression illustrate how identity is constructed and malleable, not necessarily fixed but continually modified by interactions with social and cultural forces. It is noted that Anwar's insistence on a certain way of life and Haroon's inclusion of mysticism are examples of "reactive cultural assertion," which is a reaction to the demands of being a minority. These actions show how identities are negotiated rather than intrinsic, challenging the dichotomies of assimilation and authenticity.

Otherwise, Ali Güneş has outlined the perception of "otherness" is deeply embedded in the subconscious of immigrant communities, leading them to view themselves as distinct from the white population and to feel a disconnection from the local British culture if they do not identify with it. Haroon harbors a deep-seated belief rooted in his subconscious, shaped by his experiences in a colonized nation. He believes that individuals of European descent will, in all circumstances, impede the ascent of "brown like Haroon" individuals or immigrants to positions of equality (Güneş, 2023, pp. 7-8). The fact that Haroon has assimilated a colonial mindset is consistently compatible with the ideas of the critic Frantz Fanon when Haroon explored the ways in which colonial people internalize a sense of inferiority because of institutional racial hierarchies, which hinders their ability to envision equality with those who colonized them. Similarly, Haroon's view of racial boundaries as unbreakable is reflective of the lasting effects of colonialism. Diasporic people's identities and views of social mobility in a Western setting are shaped by these internalized sentiments, which are an example of the "psychological scars" left by colonialism.

All migrants live in a vulnerable situation after being deprived of their origins and possessions of history. But when a migrant from a once colonized nation crosses the border that delineates the colonizer's territory, as in South Asian or Pakistani migrants in Britain, the migration narrative begins to encompass more than just the loss of "continuity" and the yearning for belonging (Akhtar et al, 2021, p. 12). This duality illustrates Kureishi's examination of identity as fractured and hybrid, a hallmark of postcolonial literature where characters grapple with assimilation and cultural preservation, often engaging in a battle for belonging and the reconstruction of a disturbed past. Moreover, Haroon engages with Oriental mysticism for questionable motives; however, he declines to idealize history, unhelpfully informing Karim that "He

wasn't proud of his past, but he wasn't unproud of it either; it just existed, and there wasn't any point in fetishizing it" "So, if I wanted the additional personality bonus of an Indian past, I would have to create it" (Kureishi, 1990, Ch 14). This quote refers to Kureishi's investigation of how cultural and non-public history is neither fully accepted nor rejected, but rather existing as an objective, ineluctable component of identity. Kureishi often challenges the duality of pride and shame in relation to one's cultural heritage, placing an emphasis on the role of the individual employer in the formation of one's identity but also recognizing the inevitability of the past.

There are similarities and differences in the protagonists' journeys in both novels. Karim and Irie, albeit both originating from mixed ethnic backgrounds, navigate their identity challenges in distinct ways. Karim's journey is characterized by defiance and exploration, as he challenges cultural norms to ascertain his identity in Britain. Conversely, Irie's journey is more introspective, motivated by a desire to discover and connect with her familial heritage. Their divergent evaluations illustrate the intricacies of navigating cultural hybridity when identification serves both as a quest and a means of self-discovery. Kureishi and Smith, via the characters of Karim and Irie, referred to the personal and social aspects of belonging in modern Britain, highlighting the struggles of the second generation who possess dual cultural affiliations but exhibit a preference for one culture over the other. According to Second Module & British English, Irie's hybrid identity distinguishes her within society since her public experiences are shaped by her cultural in-betweenness; but, unlike Karim, Irie does not see or describe herself as English at all. In this context, she seems to struggle more than Karim, whose primary objective is to escape the mundane existence in the suburbs, while her goal is to get a more Western appearance and behavior. Her aspirations and objectives are thus even more impractical and extreme (Second & English, 2016, p. 9). Moreover, Samina Akhtar et al state:

Kureishi's characters fight for their survival and sense of belonging in a foreign land, yet inwardly, they feel strongly attracted to the secular and free Western lifestyle. Their existence hangs between two cultures with mixed identities. While they are tempted by the Western lifestyle, they are simultaneously crushed under their historical and cultural backgrounds. (Akhtar et al, 2021, p. 15)

Kureishi's protagonists contend with the combined challenges of survival and the need for belonging in an alien environment, while also being irresistibly attracted to the secular, unfettered lifestyle of the West. This dual life illustrates their struggle to reconcile the allure of Western liberties with the burden of their historical and cultural legacies. The conflict between these two forces underscores the characters' complex identities, as they fluctuate between the desire to integrate into Western culture and the unavoidable impact of their histories, particularly in the character of Karim.

"Irie remain native (rather Jamaican) in body and white in spirit being sunk in perpetual dichotomies while living in London. Their self-identity remains in flux in the so-called multicultural London society where white wo/man/culture is the prescriptive norm" (Andru & Jyothirmal, 2018, p. 85). The complexity of identification is experienced by bi-racial youngsters such as Irie, who appreciate the duality of being ethnically connected to their Jamaican heritage while embracing Western (often white) cultural standards because of their environment. Irie's conflict exemplifies the larger issue of cultural displacement and the persistence of colonial legacies that prioritize Western ideas above other identities. As Second Module and British English have outlined, Irie is more receptive to allowing her identity to be molded by the two cultures that impact her after her reunion with Hortense. She starts to see her mother's features again and comes to grips with the fact that she does not have a reflection. Along with some old books, maps, and news articles on Jamaica, she discovers ancient images of her great-grandmother and great-grandfather. During this transitional period, she learns about and appreciates her Jamaican heritage (Second & English, 2016, p. 18). Irie's journey to reunite with her grandma Hortense and explore her Jamaican heritage illustrates her increasing embrace of her mixed identity. This transforming process underscores the need to comprehend one's cultural and family heritage to cultivate a more cohesive identity. Such interactions with historical objects often help diasporic individuals reconcile fragmented identities and adopt a multicultural life. As Elaine Helman has outlined, Irie and Karim find themselves ensnared in a web of mental and social constraints yet simultaneously shielded by the identities they initially embrace. These identities encompass the fictitious barriers they erect to preserve their self-perceptions, striving to appear unremarkable, to evade the label of victims of racism, and to assert their status as ordinary British citizens who possess a sense of belonging (Helman, 2014, p. 44). So, they experience bewilderment and a shattered sense of self

as a result of seeing London's unpleasant social reality when these imagined barriers finally crumble.

Furthermore, Irie searches for the history and roots of her mother, while Karim searches for the history and roots of his father as well. For this reason, both Karim and Irie search for their lost and difficult-to-reach historical roots. Therefore, Irie's concentration on discovering her mother's Jamaican heritage and Karim's investigation into his father's Indian past highlight second-generation immigrants' difficulties in developing a meaningful sense of self. Their different pursuits represent a larger battle against cultural dislocation and the loss of historical continuity in diasporic societies. As Ankie Hoogvelt argues "postcolonial discourse aims to reconstruct the identities of subordinated peoples, give them back their pride of place history, and with it the confidence to build on the record of their own hybrid position of practice and negotiation" (Hoogvelt, 2001, p. 170). Karim and Irie find themselves in a unique spot where their cultural identity shifts between the immigrant backgrounds of their parents and their own experiences growing up in Britain. They find it tough to match how they see white Londoners, London, and themselves with how white Londoners see and expect them to be. Karim and Irie try to go about their lives without letting racism get in the way. Even though they want to focus on their day-to-day experiences, their skin color and the little they know about their family histories still hang over them, impacting how they connect with others. They have a twisted view of who they are and where they fit in, along with a warped idea of what home and community mean. This leads to awkward and tense relationships with everyone around them, no matter their skin color (Helman, 2014, p. 6). They inhabit transitional realms, where their individual identities are molded by the clashing cultural influences of their immigrant parents and the predominantly white British society. In their pursuit of reconciling these divergent expectations, they encounter a profound sense of alienation from both realms. Karim frequently repudiates his Indian heritage in his pursuit of validation within British society, whereas Irie's odyssey focuses on the reclamation and appreciation of her Jamaican lineage.

The way white Londoners act really shapes the spaces around them, allowing Karim and Irie to carve out their own mental and social areas of power and identity that aren't so easily influenced by those same white Londoners (p. 12). Thus, London serves a dual purpose for Irie and Karim by both enhancing their adaptation and intensifying their identity difficulties. The city's vibrant and adversarial atmosphere compels the

second generation to constantly safeguard and rearticulate their identities. The metropolitan environment undermines their feeling of belonging, compelling them to pursue drastic efforts for societal integration. This continual exposure to more accomplished and socially validated individuals exacerbates their fears and sense of alienation. The recognition of alternate patterns of being in London further undermines their identities, engendering a continual battle to find a space where Karim and Irie can really belong. Through the depiction of Irie and Karim within London's cosmopolitan environment, both Smith and Kureishi elucidate the intricacies and paradoxes of hybrid identities. The city's varied population and cultural conflicts exemplify the wider postcolonial experience, illustrating how the pursuit of identity and acceptance can be both powerful and debilitating.

Irie becomes the focal point of silent mockery and a ludicrous depiction of the hybrid. Smith neither condemns the concept nor endorses it; instead, he illustrates that although multiculturalism and hybridity are celebrated as theoretical and biological phenomena, their practical viability and sustainability within British culture pose significant challenges (Namayanja, 2023, p. 205). Irie's identity, as the offspring of a Jamaican mother and a white British father, epitomizes the confluence of cultures; nonetheless, her quest for belonging reveals the discord between conceptual acceptability and cultural truths. Her "absurd portrayal" highlights Britain's unease with mixed identities, which challenge conventional cultural norms and classifications of race and belonging. Ultimately, Irie's identity journey is a comprehensive indictment of multicultural Britain's failure to adequately embrace its varied communities. On the other hand, John Ball points out that people like Karim and his father, Haroon, are caught inside historically created identities. The symbolic imperial core, London, becomes a place where Karim's identity is molded not by its uniqueness but by outside cultural expectations. Karim understands that his dual identity puts him always "half in and half out," neither truly belonging to England nor his Indian background even as he tries to access British culture (Ball, 1996, p. 11). Furthermore, Karim and Haroon "market back to the English warmed-over versions of their own popular appropriations of Indian culture" (p. 23). This reflects continued colonial power relations, in which the hybrid is seen as a pleasant, exotic caricature rather than a real, independent identity. Karim's hybridity therefore becomes a performance of his identity, which is commodified for British consumption.

Implications of cultural hybridity on the readers have really become a key aspect of postcolonial literature, especially in stories that dive into themes of identity, displacement, and belonging. *The Buddha of Suburbia* and *White Teeth* really dive into cultural diversity, identity, and what it's like for diasporic communities. They give readers a deep look into these experiences. Smith and Kureishi show us characters who are navigating the clash between their ancestral traditions and modern life in Britain. Elaine Helman states that the readers are also made aware of the enduring and life-altering impacts of racism in London via the characters' shared social struggles throughout multiple time periods. Stories are more likely to strike a chord with readers when set in realistic and given London's diverse population and rich history, physically and socially recognizable metropolitan surroundings (Helman, 2014, p. 19). Wherefor, they really push back against rigid ideas of culture and highlight how identity can change and adapt in postcolonial settings. Deeping into hybridity helps us see the tensions, conflicts, and possibilities that come with multicultural societies. The way hybridity is shown in both novels really influence how readers think about cultural diversity and identity. It highlights the societal challenges related to inclusion, assimilation, and heritage too. According to the postcolonial academic Homi Bhabha's theory, the term "cultural hybridity" refers to the blending of cultural identities that takes place because of colonialism and migration. Homi Bhabha contends that hybridity emerges in the "Third Space," which is a location of negotiation and reinterpretation. In this space, cultural boundaries are dissolved, which enables the emergence of new identities (Bhabha, 1994, p. 36). By depicting individuals whose lives are defined by dual heritage and shattered cultural belonging, their theme is crucial to both Smith's and Kureishi's works. Both authors' works are characterized by the presence of dual ancestry. Within the context of current British society, the characters are forced to face themes of race, history, and identity via their presence in this liminal place.

Kureishi focuses on the experiences of Karim, a British Asian adolescent who is attempting to navigate his identity in the middle of the cultural demands of his Indian immigrant father, Haroon, and his white British surroundings. The fact that Karim is of mixed origin leaves him in a precarious situation since he does not entirely belong to either culture, yet he takes inspiration from both of them. In a similar manner, Smith's work introduces the character of Irie Jones, who is of Jamaican and British origin, respectively, and who struggles with her racial and cultural identities in the context of

London's varied but split culture. Harrache HARRACHE and Mounira Siham believe that "the readers are subjected to being taken back in time to see roots via flashbacks so that we can see the tragic situation of second generation" (HARRACHE & Siham, 2020, p. 96). Where readers get a fresh perspective on London and its cultural connections via the spatial effects of these characters' actions. Additionally, they assist readers in rethinking their own conceptual, physical, and experiential spaces in relation to second-generation immigrants in London and a fresh take on British citizenship (Helman, 2014, p. 24). In addition to, these novels force readers to reflect on how multiculturalism often fails in practical terms, even if it thrives as a theoretical ideal. Furthermore, the two novels advocate a reevaluation of the national character of the United Kingdom, demolishing the illusion of a homogeneous society and instead acknowledging the contributions of immigrant populations in terms of their depth and complexity. The exploration of generational dissonance is vital; for instance, Irie suffers discrimination arising from her ancestry and ethnicity, but her obstacles also show a way to self-definition. In a similar vein, Karim's search for identification sheds light on the absurdity of cultural performance, which is characterized by the fact that "belonging" often involves meeting the expectations of both immigrant and white British nations. When reading any of these novels, readers are simultaneously prompted to reevaluate the basic dichotomies of "Britishness and otherness."

In contrast, *The Buddha of Suburbia* and *White Teeth* contest the concept of a uniquely British identity by highlighting the contributions of immigrant populations to Britain's cultural tapestry. Kureishi's portrayal of Haroon's Eastern spirituality and Smith's examination of familial history illustrate how cultural hybridity enhances British culture, while also highlighting persistent issues of racism and exclusion. This viewpoint emphasizes the significance of seeing variety as a source of cultural enrichment rather than discord. Smith and Kureishi illustrate how ethnic variety enhances British writing and reveals social shortcomings via comedy, satire, and multi-generational storytelling. Readers are encouraged to observe the individuals' challenges and to examine their own prejudices on race, identity, and belonging within heterogeneous communities. Ku Chaturvedi and Deepika Dhand state that Smith's deep insight into her novel invites readers to examine the complex tapestry of identities that define contemporary Britain, urging individuals to accept the diversity and enjoy the distinct views that each person brings to her/his ring (Chaturvedi & Dhand, 2024, p.

1795). Even so, it is the journeys of Irie and Karim that truly inspire readers, encouraging them to embrace fresh perspectives and create their own unique experiences. As Karim and Irie bravely challenge the age-old colonial and racist beliefs that still linger, they empower readers to join them on this important journey of reflection and change (Helman, 2014, p. 34). When Karim and Irie make mental and social places of power and identities that white Londoners cannot easily take away from them because of how their actions affect space. Readers can learn more about London and its cultural connections by looking at how these characters' actions affect space. Also, they help readers change how they think about, experience, and see a new view of British identity and how second-generation are treated in London (Helman, 2014, p. 24). Kureishi and Smith give the reader limited identities by the protagonists like Karim and Irie or in themselves or anybody else. In fact, the authors encourage readers to figure out why these individuals in their novels are going through identity crises in the first place and how their hybrid identities came to be (p. 28). Through this concept, the reader realizes that the true meaning of cultural hybridity is how identity gradually develops and crystallizes until it becomes a hybrid identity, even if the individual is not genetically hybrid like Jones and Jamila, but they became hybrids through the exchange of cultures and diving in society that influenced them and the inner tendencies of feelings as well as the welcome from others.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this thesis is to investigate the concept of hybridity in two novels depth the concepts of hybridity, non/belonging, and identity in post-colonial Britain as well as the hardships faced by the first- and second-generation immigrants in both novels *White Teeth* and *The Buddha of Suburbia*. Both novels critically draw on the struggles of their characters navigating dual cultural heritages as well as societal pressures and at the same time, confronting the ongoing colonial heritage.

Smith pointed out the internal and external struggles of those generations brought up through historical memory, assimilation, acceptance of other cultures, and the search for self-definition within the multicultural framework of Britain, such as Erie and her grandmother. These characters embody Stuart Hall's concept of identity as an ongoing process, shaped by tensions between personal history and societal narratives. As for Kureishi's novel, he focused on the fluidity of identity in a newly experienced society, as the protagonist Karim faced the challenges of hybrid identities in Britain through racial prejudice, class difficulties, and cultural upheavals in the mid-1970s. There are clear challenges in Kureishi's story to critique Thatcherite Britain, which struggles with rigid definitions of identity and embraces hybridity as a defining feature of contemporary existence.

According to *White Teeth* and *The Buddha of Suburbia*, the concept of hybridity is an active, transformative, and intermingled theme between two different cultures, so new identities are formed through this concept. Smith has focused on the concept of cultural hybridity through the real-life experiences of Iqbal's family and the generational psychological conflicts between Samad and his sons. Therefore, Samad tried as much to preserve his cultural roots in Western society to maintain a single identity in a pluralistic society. But, in Kureishi's story, Karim's journey is filled with struggles over the fluidity of hybrid identity as he navigates his mixed heritage - Indian father, English mother - and finds himself constantly adapting through his journey to fit into all the different social contexts.

There were divisions in the cultures that developed within postcolonial diaspora families between first- and second-generation immigrants. For example, Samad decided to send Majid to Bangladesh in an attempt to hold on to and establish Majid's identity in his cultural heritage and work with Bangladeshi traditions. Samad eventually

concluded that Majid was alienated, which confirms the limits of cultural determinism. This indicates that an individual's identity is shaped by the influences and inclinations of the homeland in which one grows up, not by fixed heritage. Likewise, Karim's parents represent two different approaches to intercultural marriages. Haroon's dual role as an East Indian teacher and a British civil servant smoothly negotiates identity, but Margaret faces the conflicts that result from marrying into other cultures.

Both novels refer to London as a multifaceted environment and this city symbolizes the beautiful and painful realities of multicultural Britain. Smith considers London as a vibrant but fragmented urban landscape, and through the three families of Iqbal, Jones and Chalfin, London is revealed as dual nature and a fascinating site for cultural exchange and postcolonial conflicts. With its diverse and harmonious neighborhoods of linguistic diversity and color, London has become a microcosm of global identities, which points to the difficult confrontations and possibilities of living in a multicultural society. In addition, London's spaces reflected the interaction between cultural history and modern life, which adds to the complexities of negotiating and accepting identity across generations. Moreover, Karim's upbringing in the suburbs surrounding London provides him with great opportunities for a vibrant cultural life, as well as for self-redevelopment and self-discovery in the middle of the city, which Kureishi points to as a fluidity of cultural diversity and considers London as a space of constant, endless transformation.

As for non/belonging to identity, Irie Jones attempts to search for her mother's cultural family roots in order to discover the missing part of her own family roots. Irie's sense of identity cannot be based entirely on the past or a fixed cultural narrative but rather on a need that has been shaped by personal as well as historical influences. While, Karim resists being bound by traditional categories, choosing instead to walk a path that blends aspects of his South Asian heritage with the opportunities he faces in modern Britain to embrace cultural hybridity. On the other hand, Kureishi continues to argue that identity is multifaceted and evolving, shaped by the intersections of culture, class, and individual agency.

Smith and Kureishi's novels dramatically convey the effects of colonialism on contemporary British society by showing how the historical legacy of immigration and racial hierarchies have shaped the identities and experiences of the characters in those

novels. If it highlights the character of Hortense Bowden in her connection to the experiences of her granddaughter Erie in London, we find that Hortense's past is full of colonial conflicts, which transmit these conflicts to future generations and have a negative impact on the formation of personal and collective identities. In the same vein, it is clear from the aristocratic Indian background of Haroon's character and his mental and physical adaptation to British society, but in reality, it is clear that Haroon has a tension between his colonial past and his contemporary identity, moving between the expectations and prejudices of British and Indian cultures at the same time. Both authors criticize the inequalities and persistent prejudices that characterize the protagonists' lives and show how colonial histories continue to shape societal structures and individual experiences in the present. Through these real-life adventures, they focus on the potential for the multicultural landscape of contemporary Britain to be transformed and enriched by new hybrid identities.

Also, the thesis referred to liminality shows the in-between situation experienced by characters negotiating many cultures; it is the transitional phase, a threshold when identities are flexible and ambiguous. Conversely, mimicry is adopting the characteristics of the dominant culture, usually resulting in a warped view that both questions and support colonial power. As shown in characters who both follow and challenge societal conventions, this duality generates conflict. According to Homi Bhabha, the third space goes beyond these binaries and is a changing location where new, hybrid identities develop via the interplay of many cultural influences. This area encourages redefining and negotiating, hence shattering strict identity limitations. These ideas together underline the complexity of belonging and identity development in postcolonial settings, therefore supporting the thesis' main point of view of cultural hybridity as a process defined by fluidity, resistance, and change. Emphasizing how these components interact to redefine identities within multicultural settings, this synthesis corresponds with the earlier result.

At the end of this thesis, of course yes, there is great optimism for multiculturalism that has generated cultural hybridity. Although there are racism and conflicts that come from colonial history or are inherent in daily life, these works fight together for a society that values and interacts with adaptation in living and inclusion, celebrates differences, and recognizes the common humanity that lies behind diverse identities.

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