

T.C.

İSTANBUL YENİ YÜZYIL UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE DEPARTMENT
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE PROGRAMME



CULTURAL HYBRIDITY AND DIASPORA IN *WHITE TEETH* (2000) BY ZADIE SMITH AND *BRICK LANE* (2003) BY MONICA ALI

MA THESIS

OMAR IMAD HUSSEIN HUSSEIN

20131306006

İSTANBUL, JUNE 2023

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ETHICAL STATEMENT

I prepared my project following the thesis writing rules of the Institute of Social Sciences at Istanbul Yeni Yüzyıl University, and I hereby declare that;

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OMAR IMAD HUSSEIN HUSSEIN

PREFACE

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to my supervisor Assistant Professor Göksenin ABDAL, for his valuable support and patience during my thesis period. This thesis would not have been possible without his encouragement and expert supervision. I am grateful for his vital, insightful feedback and invaluable input during the writing process. I am also grateful to my jury members, Assistant Professor Başak ERGİL and Assistant Professor Javid ALİYEV, for their valuable time and contributions to both my thesis and their work within the Department of English Language and Literature at Yeni Yüzyıl University. I am also thankful to all the members of our department who took the time to answer my questions and guide me during this process. Finally, and most importantly, I would like to extend my deepest thanks to my father, Imad Hussein, and my mother, Amel Khudhair, who have endlessly encouraged and guided me throughout my life. It is thanks to them that I have developed into an independent thinker.

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ÖZET

ZADIE SMITH'İN *WHITE TEETH* (2000) VE MONICA ALI'NİN *BRICK LANE* (2003) ESERLERİNDE KÜLTÜREL MELEZLİK VE DIASPORA

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Bu tez, Zadie Smith'in *White Teeth* (2000) ve Monica Ali'nin *Brick Lane* (2003) romanlarındaki göçmenlik ve kimlik kaybı sorununu, Londra toplumunda melezlik ve diaspora sorununa vurgu yaparak postkolonyal teori ışığında analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Birleşik Krallık'taki göçmen topluluklar arasındaki ayrımcılığın yanı sıra, bu çalışma, her iki anlatıda azınlık toplumlarındaki ırkçı söylem ve olaylara dair örnekler içermektedir. Bu romanlarda sömürgecilerin hegemonyası, postkolonyal teori ve kültürün kültürel, sosyal, dini ve politik yönleri ışığında incelenmektedir. Bu çalışma, ağırlıklı olarak, Batı medeniyetinin bir parçası olarak İngiliz toplumu başta olmak üzere azınlıklara karşı tavırlara da ışık tutmaktadır. Örneğin, göçmenlerin geri kalmış, aptal, zayıf ve sessiz olarak nitelendirilmesi, Batı ve sömürge toplumlarının yaydığı yanlış imaj, ırkçılığın olumsuz etkilerinden biri olan kimlik kaybına yol açmaktadır. Sonuç olarak, bu romanlarda, hem Smith hem de Ali'nin, seslerini yükselterek sömürü ve uzun vadeli kötü niyetli hedefleri teşhir ederek toplumlarının imajını sağlamlaştırmaya ve onlara tam bir özgürlük vermeye çalıştıkları ortaya çıkmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Postkolonyal Edebiyat, Melezlik, Diaspora, Zadie Smith, Monica Ali.

ABSTRACT

CULTURAL HYBRIDITY AND DIASPORA IN *WHITE TEETH* (2000) BY ZADIE SMITH AND *BRICK LANE* (2003) BY MONICA ALI

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This thesis aims to analyze the problem of immigrants and identity loss in *White Teeth* (2000) by Zadie Smith and *Brick Lane* (2003) by Monica Ali in the light of postcolonial theory with an emphasis on the problem of hybridity and diaspora in London society as well as the discrimination between the expatriate communities in the United Kingdom. This study includes examples of racist discourses and events in minority societies in both narratives. The hegemony of the colonizers in these novels is examined in light of the cultural, social, religious, and political aspects of postcolonial theory and culture. This study mainly sheds light on exposing the harms committed against minorities, especially in British society as a part of Western civilization. For instance, immigrants are described as backward, foolish, weak, and silent, which is the false image that Western and colonial societies convey, resulting in the loss of identity, one of the adverse effects of racism. As a result, it becomes apparent in the analysis of these novels that both writers, Smith and Ali, try to consolidate the image of their societies and give them complete freedom by raising their voices and exposing the pernicious goals of exploitation and the long-lasting effects of colonialism.

Keywords: Postcolonial Literature, Hybridity, Diaspora, Zadie Smith, Monica Ali.

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INTRODUCTION

The twentieth century witnessed a vast number of radical changes reflecting in different areas of life. Especially after two World Wars, one of the dramatic changes occurred with the complete independence of the colonised countries under the colonial powers plundering their wealth and bounties. This led to the formation of weak states due to the lack of experience in the state administration, gave rise to internal conflicts, and prevented their society from democratically joining the state administration within these postcolonial states. These conflicts caused a significant amount of migration to the countries where the postcolonial reality becomes substantially apparent with the sufferings from internal conflicts and struggles in the motherland. The migration from the former colonies established mighty bases for the creation of culturally hybrid societies consisting of the culture of the home nation and that of the new country. The controversies between the expatriates and residents brought about problems within the individual, which is duly manifested in the identification and adaptation for the newly resident societies where cultures and sects transcend. Postcolonial studies is attributed to studying these societies, their nature, way of living, and adaptation to the new environment.

Postcolonialism did not find a place in the world of criticism until after the 1990s. The main focus of postcolonial criticism has been the reconstruction of pre-colonial cultures. Since the cultures of colonial countries were affected by colonial domination, postcolonial criticism attempted to undermine the dominant European central discourses to destroy the effects of colonialism. However, the goal of reconstructing pre-colonial cultures may seem impossible due to its distortion of colonialism. The distortion of indigenous cultures by colonialism also affects the subjects of the colonial country in terms of their identification. Therefore, identity not only becomes a problematic issue in the postcolonial world as a result of colonial domination but also becomes a magnet because it “captured the imagination of many literary and cultural specialists” (Rajan & Mohanram, 1995, p. 101). The point of attraction, created by the problem of identity, constitutes the second stage of postcolonial criticism. As Brian Barry discusses, Postcolonial Criticism. Involved a turn towards explorations of themselves [the decolonized people] and their society by postcolonial writers. At this stage the celebration and exploration of diversity,

hybridity, and difference become central. (Barry, 2002, p. 196)

Identity problems arose primarily in postcolonial countries and imperial centers open to immigrants from the sovereign. As Ketu H. Katrak discusses, the modern world has witnessed a wave of immigration on an unprecedented scale. Migrations are due to economic needs or by choice but are all rooted in imperialist ideas that persist within postcolonial societies (Katrak, 1991, p. 649). Therefore, with the increase in the number of immigrants from East to West, more and more people face the identity crisis in the imperial centers, which became multicultural societies in return. On the other hand, people in postcolonial countries are directly influenced by cultural hybridisation and may suffer from the lingering effects of colonial domination even after decolonisation. Thus, in terms of their identification, people living in postcolonial countries face significant problems more often than their counterparts in imperial centers. Hence, postcolonial literature sheds light on hybridised cultural identities and language with themes from postcolonial theory. Emphasising this theme, contemporary postcolonial writers focus on the discourse of hybridity as the contrast between being neither/not meeting the subversive practice of resistance. Among the novelists who have used discourse of hybridity, Zadie Smith, and Monica Ali, are hybrids themselves who rewrote their personal histories and stories in their literary works. Zadie Smith's *White Teeth*, and Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* are influential novels of the postcolonial period in which hybrid characters find themselves. Both novels share themes of hybrid identity, and portray common aspects such as life after colonialism, isolation, loneliness, and identity crisis.

Hybridity is a key concept when considering migrant communities. It offers a way of identity that is not bound by ideals of national, racial, or cultural purity (McLeod, 2000, p. 219). The concept of hybridity is related to the concept of identity for immigrants and diaspora communities, but it is also about the question of languages and the mixture of cultures and traditions. The identity itself is constantly under creation and change. Hybrid identities do not exist in a finalised state but rather continue to shift (McLeod, 2000, p. 219), follow unexpected paths, and are open to change. Here, being hybrid refers to intrinsic impossibility of constructing a fully-fledged identity after the devastating effects of imperialist aggression against the colonised. In this way, hybridism challenges the idea that identity is a fixed position

and sets potent grounds to examine how people relate to the cultures they find themselves and the experiences they have within those cultures. In a postcolonial context, hybridisation may be described as the formation of transcultural beings within the dual frameworks of colonialism and the host culture (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 1998, p. 118). Vanessa Guignery states that hybridisation is an alternative way of examining the concept of primary cultures and requires the inspection of power structures within a given culture (Guignery, 2012, p. 4). Hybridity, therefore, gives us a lens to challenge the supposed dichotomies between the self and the other, and the colonised and the colonising force upholding imperialist ideas. Some critics claim that hybridity may function as both commodification of culture and inter-cultural exchange without the need to be positioned as either or the other. (Brah & Coombes, 2000, p. 1). Conversely, other scholars state that those who value purity see crossbreeding as a means of contamination in the identity (Brah & Coombes, 2000, p. 1).

Both Smith's and Ali's works interrogate the concept of hybridity, bringing about consciousness regarding the complexity of the issue. These novels display the lack of 'purity' in colonial cultures and how such cultures and languages are tied together leading to the formation of hybrid identities at the margins of containment. This thesis aims to study and discuss the emergence of hybrid identities, with the concepts of postcolonial hybridity and hybrid identity based on race, culture, social, class, economic position, and religion in *White Teeth* by Zadie Smith and *Brick Lane* by Monica Ali. In addition, these two narratives allow us to observe the changes in crossbreeding and the reactions of the crosses in postcolonial contexts. Hence, in this study, the reasons behind the identity crises about being hybrids will be discussed in both novels with regards to the functions of colonisation and living in a multicultural society. Finally, the question of whether the characters are able to overcome their identity crisis will be analysed.

Both novels revolve around experiences in multicultural societies about which main characters do not have much clue. Thus, the causes of hybrid identity crises differ. While the strict division of races in postcolonial culture causes the characters to live in *Brick Lane*, the characters face hybrid identity crises in *White Teeth* because they cannot adapt to the English culture. This shows how spatial factors are indicative of problems in a multicultural society due to the racial tension in postcolonial process

of identity making.

Identity is an integral part of human nature and has been a point of focus for postcolonial theorists since the beginning of the decolonisation of colonised countries. Moreover, as Parekh suggest, “human beings are culturally embedded in the sense that they are born into, raised in and deeply shaped by their cultural communities” (Parekh, 2002, p. 120). However, in the postcolonial world, where the dominant European discourses dominate knowledge about the Orient, the culture is also shaped under the colonial oppression and stigmatization regarding the other. Therefore, it generally seems difficult for immigrants and indigenous peoples to establish their own identities because they cannot go back to pre-colonial period eradicated by colonialism.

Brick Lane and *White Teeth* are focused on in this study because they represent a common problem in the contemporary postcolonial world: the crisis of having a hybrid identity. In this manner, this study becomes essential in understanding the relations between culture, race, and identity formation. Since a hybrid identity is very likely in postcolonial and multicultural societies, the role of culture in these societies cannot be ignored. In postcolonial societies where culture is affected by colonialism, the hybrid identity crises of fictional characters happen to be more severe than those experienced by people living in multicultural societies. By attempting to shed light on the causes of the identity crisis that is dragging people into chaos and self-inquiry about their identities, this study provides a rigorous assessment of the hybrid identity problems people potentially face in postcolonial multicultural societies. Concerning *Brick Lane* and *White Teeth*, hybrid identity crises of characters occur due to various reasons such as religious conflicts, cultural rehybridization, and the inability to adapt to the English culture.

When some critics debate hybridity in terms of cultural dominance, they conclude that the idea of hybridity challenges and explores the socio-political aspects of culture in multicultural and postcolonial contexts. Ien Ang discusses this idea thusly:

For postcolonial cultural theorists such as Stuart Hall, Paul Gilroy, Trinh Minha, Homi Bhabha and others, hybridity has an explicitly critical political purchase. They see the hybrid as a critical force that undermines or subverts, from inside out, dominant formations through the interstitial insinuation of the ‘different’, the ‘other’ or the ‘marginalized’ into the very fabric of the dominant. (2001, p. 198)

In the twentieth century, linguistics and culture began to integrate the hybridity into their research by expanding the notion of composite language in strictly defined cultural environments. Dwelling on the linguistic side of hybrid identity, Mikhail Bakhtin positions hybridisation as the combination of “two social languages within the limits of a single utterance” that occurs between alternate linguistic perspectives. The linguistic consciousness may be removed by time, social status, or other varying factors (1981a, p. 358). This thesis focuses on Smith’s and Ali’s narratives by bringing together the formation and development of hybrid identities and composite language use in their characters.

These two novels are significant contributions to modern literature with their focal points on immigrants to London, the gap between their goals and achievements, the conflict between local cultures and foreign atmospheres, the need to assimilate and the fear of losing oneself, the reaction of nationalists, and the development of religious extremism. With its setting, *White Teeth* offers a postcolonial journey into a multi-ethnic community with numerous religious and cultural backgrounds in North London, whereas *Brick Lane* recreates the life of the Bengali immigrants from the perspective of refusal to change in East London. Although these narratives illustrate some common migration issues, they differ fundamentally from each other in their use of language, tone, characterisation, and in how they tackle with different incidents.

The narrator in *White Teeth* is a neutral observer who constantly implies the impossibility of finding meaningful ways of communication between people of different ethnic backgrounds in the Northwest London. In contrast, in *Brick Lane*, the narrator is more than a neutral photographer with a higher level of consciousness. Seeing things from a female perspective, the narrator of *Brick Lane* takes a guesswork most of the time and uses the English language to incorporate words and expressions from the mother tongue to give the novel a regional tone. This study provides us insights on these differences prevailing in narrative lines of both novels regarding how Ali delves into the relations among immigrant populations, and Smith’s perspective captures interactions between people of diverse ethnic backgrounds, presenting us with a composite picture of contemporary London society.

This thesis consists of three chapters apart from the introduction and

conclusion. The first chapter, Postcolonial and Postcolonial Literature, explores the postcolonial literary theory with reflections from notable theorists. Hence, it tries to unveil how the repercussions of colonialism left behind a hybrid identity that made the previously colonised peoples feel inferior to their colonisers from the perspective of Homi Bhabha. This chapter specifically theorizes the reasons behind the formation and development of hybrid societies with the waves of migration outside the postcolonial countries after the two world wars. The potential impacts of hybrid identity will be questioned in the spotlight of how the differences between the host society and their culture affect them.

The second chapter deals with *White Teeth* by through the narratives of several generations from Samad Iqbal and his suffering in preserving his grandfather's legacy, who symbolises freedom for his outlook on life. Concerning the second generation represented by the children of Samad, the main narrative shifts to their seemingly mundane efforts for building their lives in the shadow of a multicultural society which differs in terms of belonging, thought, and religious beliefs from their own. This chapter analyses the concepts of hybridity and diaspora with insights from Homi Bhabha and other prominent scholars of postcolonial theory.

The third chapter focuses on Ali's novel *Brick Lane*, which takes its name from the same neighbourhood of the late-20th-Century Bangladeshi immigrant population in London. The narrative revolves around the main character Nazneen, a Bangladeshi woman who finds herself in London following an arranged marriage to expatriate Chanu. In the early years of her marriage, Nazneen has almost zero contact with the world outside her. Her days are spent on domestic duties with almost no English words to venture outside except for "sorry" and "thank you" (Ali, 2027, p. 14). As she endures pregnancies, homesickness, and loneliness, Nazneen wishes desperately to be in her homeland of Gouripur, East Pakistan. According to Weedon (2009), in *Brick Lane*, the remote homeland is critical in the survival of the immigrant as it allows for positive dreams and memories to occur (Weedon, 2009, p. 27). Having limited access to London's social opportunities, Nazneen has to rely on her memories of Gouripur to uplift herself. However, when she is unable to prevent her first son's death, she becomes traumatised and tired of being helpless. Nazneen empowers herself when, for the first time, she goes out in London alone and is able to succeed with a stranger in

English (Ali, 2007, p. 61). After she takes up sewing to have financial independence and her affair with the man who brings her sewing work from his uncle's sweatshop, Karim, Nazneen finds an identity not dependent on anyone. Being exposed to such a multicultural society permits her to move out into social spheres freely. Sociologist Zygmunt Bauman highlights the idea that "the problem of identity" is a recent issue derived through the disconnect between birth and nationhood as a once single cause-effect factor (Bauman & Vecchi, 2004, p. 24). Bauman implies that we are subject to dramatic changes as we live in a more malleable society which is devoid of stability. In such a live setting, "identities are perhaps the most common, most acute, most deeply felt and troublesome incarnations of ambivalence" (Bauman & Vecchi, 2004, p. 32). With reflections from Ali's *Brick Lane*, this chapter elaborates on societal issues arising from internal conflicts of individuals who witness racism, xenophobia, religious discrimination, and polarisation in a multicultural society.

Consequently, this study is an attempt to discuss the concepts of hybridity and diaspora in Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* and Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*, two crucial narratives that reflect those conflicts in English multicultural society. As these novels challenge the overarching narratives of the imperial past that brings forward highly complex discourses to identity systems and naturalisation of the complexity of hybrid identities, this study substantially aims to offer new paths and horizons to the notion of hybridity with new grounds of literary analysis on the difficulties of crossbreeding and diaspora in the postcolonial culture.

1. POSTCOLONIALISM AND POSTCOLONIAL LITERATURE

To study postcolonial theory, it is necessary to study the history of colonialism to have foundational knowledge of the policies and practices in those countries. This chapter deals with the history of European occupation, its origins, its roots in the countries occupied, and the most critical policies practiced in order for colonialism to survive as long as possible. Britain, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, France, Belgium, and Germany are among the key countries practicing colonial policies in Asia, Africa, and Australia. This chapter will explain their practices and goals in those occupied countries.

Another focal point of this chapter is postcolonial theory, which dwells on the aftermath of colonialism with a broad definition of colonialism. As such, this chapter will explain how colonisation has maintained its influence on the political, economic and cultural aspects of the colonised area even after the end of the military period of colonialism. The adverse results are not limited to coloniser's role in leading people to emigrate as a way to escape from the miseries of postcolonial life, but also the will to obtain a decent life far from the disturbances and problems of identity crisis is at play. As the individual's ability to construct an identity consisting of two cultures plays a critical role in self-reflexive way of thinking, the concept of crossbreeding will be profoundly discussed by taking into account the hierarchical ways of seeing in colonial thought. As hybridisation seeks to define the details and boundaries between cultures, hierarchical categories behind this concept are to be challenged due to the ambiguity of cultural boundaries that have the potential to distinguish and control the identities in return (Bhabha, 1994, p. 114). Here, diasporic relations positioning hybridity as an independent case of identity from the colonised should be analysed in detail since "diaspora journeys are mainly about settling down, and putting roots elsewhere" (Brah, 1996, p.179). With the insights from postcolonial theory, this chapter will shed light on two notions: Hybridisation and diaspora.

This chapter examines the racial difficulties and the social condition of expatriates in postcolonial England. While discussing the rebuilding of the expatriate's identity in the postcolonial epoch, the impact of the cultural encounter between

expatriates and Western society will be analysed with regards to the re-establishment of social roles and racial identity in colonial and postcolonial periods. The process of adaptation and reconstructing a new life in a new environment will be questioned considering the stark difficulties faced by migrants in postcolonial England. Further exploring the position of the immigrants, Homi Bhabha's postcolonial discourse will also be highlighted.

1.1. Historical Background of Colonialism

The roots of European Colonialism go back to the sixteenth century and reach the middle of the twentieth century, when colonialism was an exercise of political, economic, and social practices of control used by Western countries over non-Western regions, including Asia, Africa, and some parts of Australia (Loomba, 2005, p. 2- 4). Among the most prominent powers that emerged in that period are Britain, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, France, Belgium, and Germany, who still remain powerful countries that exercise their economic policies on non-Western countries in the modern world. After the geographical discoveries of the Spaniards and the Portuguese between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the British Empire was at the forefront of Europe with the achievement of its national unity and subsequent colonial operations, except that it lagged behind the Dutch and the French, as well (Heawood, 2011 p. 58). Therefore, Britain's arrival in Asia happened right after the Portuguese and the Dutch set foot on that land. Following the establishment of commerce routes by the Portuguese Empire, the Dutch presence was empowered in Asian waters.

This was one of the earliest encounters of England with a European power in Asia. This had an essential role in influencing Britain's actions in Asia - especially India - for nearly a century. As soon as the Dutch presence weakened in Asia, Britain began to gain influence on Asian activities until it became the only European power that inherited most of the Netherlands' trading role (Bosma, Raben, 2008, pp. 24-54). Between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, the British Empire emerged as one of the most powerful colonial forces in foreign territories of the world. The British government controlled North America and the Caribbean islands in the seventeenth century. As for India, Bangladesh, and Myanmar, they were also occupied by the British Empire (Kozlowski, 2010, p. 1-2). Due to strict control mechanisms on the

occupied land, Britain played an essential role in the lives of the population, not only in terms of politics but in other cultural and social aspects, which sustained its impacts for longer period of time.

The colonial policies took a new form after the Industrial Revolution. The colonial powers adopted an exploitative mode of colonialism in regions rich in primary resources, sources of raw materials, and investment outlets for the industry whereas the peoples living in territories that are poor in resources were enslaved (Manning, 1982, p. 10). Significantly, Britain became more dominant in political, economic, social and cultural affairs in these occupied territories. In other words, the peoples from these lands were deprived of their right to manage their affairs, either internally or externally. Instead, they were kept under the control of Britain as the occupying power, which led to the peoples to become weary of the segregationist policies under these colonial practices.

After World War II, in the second half of the twentieth century, African and Asian countries gained complete independence after European countries withdrew their powers from the colonies. The states that gained independence began to establish their governments away from external interference (Birmingham, 1995, pp. 1-2). Despite the autonomy that these countries obtained, they did not achieve to establish an inclusive national identity, which caused an array of internal conflicts, violence and chaos incidents with the lack of know-how in managing state institutions, creating potent bases for immigration to West (Memmi & Bononno, 2006a, p. 3-7).

1.2. Colonialism and Postcolonialism

It is difficult to define colonialism as it is usually associated with Europe's religious and political awakening in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Since that time, the Europeans dominated 'third world' countries and began to write their history even after their independence. Although it is tried to be positioned as a beneficial practice, the colonial system brought about the exploitation of a country and looting of its resources by the colonisers. As such, the economic motive resulting from the industrialism was one of the strongest implications of colonialism outside Europe. In Havinden and Meredith's terms, the colonists' endeavors to establish commercial markets and to find primary resources for industrial use triggered the deterioration of

the economy in those territories, warranting the presupposition that Europe has a more superior economic force. The second motive for those countries is to disseminate their cultural values by playing the role of a saviour to the colonised lands to save them from ignorance and to give them a 'better' status. (Tomlinson, 2002 p. 116) But, with such policies, their main motivation was to seek to plunder goods. Finally, there exists the political and military motives. The European colonisers attempted to expand their control over strategic waterways and commercial interests, as well. As Havinden and Meredith explain, they exploited the possessions of economically rich but militarily weak nations from Africa and Asia (Havinden & Meredith, 1993, p. 27).

Colonialism embodies the coercive system practised by the colonisers on their potential targets. As Thornton defines, colonialism is a political, economic, social and cultural system in which the culture and history of one nation are imposed on those who have limited or no connections to it: the imposition of ideas on the less powerful by those with more power (1962, p. 342). Thus, colonisers' intentions to explore the weak states and use their lands to implement their plans reveal the truth about their expansionist goals within target lands: Behind the reality of their expansionist goals, they claim to be the liberators of the targeted societies from ignorance and poverty.

The critical theorist Homi K. Bhabha positions the notion of occupation in an essential place within the implementation of these goals. For Bhabha, the occupation turns into an intellectual and economic one, reflected in the context of globalisation, which justifies the imposition of ideas and rules on other countries (Bhabha, 1994, p. 72). Therefore, the enslaving, commodification, displacement of people for trade and other purposes is clarified as a vindication of their colonial objectives in occupied lands. Literary theorist Hans Bertens implies the critical roles of postcolonial theory in questioning the expansionist ideology and the effects of Western imperialism, which result in the displacement of people from the former colonies. Bertens emphasises that postcolonial studies encompass the displacement of culture and the measures taken by those who find their culture suffering displacement (2001, p. 160).

Postcolonialism is a critical discourse that discusses the state of societies from different perspectives with reflections from the ethnic, social, and economic effects of colonialism. Hence, postcolonialism is a literary theory or critical approach that deals

with narratives on territories or lands occupied by colonial nations. Postcolonial theory embodies the concepts of the other, resistance, hybridity, and diaspora after the demise of colonial discourses in the light of identity construction. (Ang, 2001, p.52). The writers of this field Homi Bhabha Edward Said and Spivak decided to expose the ill effects of hegemonic power and the negative aspects of colonialism. Postcolonial study is concerned with all cultures that have been affected by colonial powers from the advent of colonialism to the present day. The writers, who bring postcolonial issues to their works, also deal with the third-world countries occupied by Western countries and America. Anya Loomba, in her book *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*, touches upon this issue by implying that almost 85% of the globe was subject to colonisation by the 1930s. From the start of these imperialist actions, colonising forces aimed at controlling the peoples of the lands they invaded. Methods of colonisation differed depending on region and era, but the results were always eerily similar (2005, p. 9).

Loomba argues that the goal of colonialism in the modern era is to exploit the natural and economic resources of developing nations. In the same vein, Aimé Césaire argues for a postcolonial discourse which shows that the exploitative treatment used against colonised lands relied on coercion, force, violence, sexual assault, forced planting, police pressure, and deception, mixed with a dose of contempt and mistrust (1972, p. 42). The postcolonial era and its theoretical scope cannot be fully known unless there is sufficient knowledge of the colonial period and its effects. Thankfully, many evidentiary documents and clear examples from the colonial era, especially regarding the people and their cultural, economic, and political life conditions remain. Through these documents, we are able to learn about the tragedies faced in the colonial countries.

Postcolonialism is a term similar to other perspectives that start with post, see poststructuralism and postmodernism, which have developed over the past three decades. The term has expanded in the cultural scene and moved from the cultural field to other areas. It now covers politics and economics, philosophy, anthropology, history, geography, and literature. As a literary theory, it is concerned with the issues of countries occupied by Britain and other countries with dominant influence over politically and economically weakened territories. It generally provides insights into the literary systems in countries such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, Kenya, Somalia, India,

Jamaica, and New Zealand. One of the primary goals pursued by postcolonial work is dismantling Eurocentrism in various areas by exposing issues and debates congested between the East and the West. Postcolonial discourse relies mainly on the unity of knowledge, power dynamics, and close interrelationships. Thus, scholars of this theory seek to reveal the realities and intended greed of the colonial occupation. They also write about the violence practiced against the citizens, which formed potent bases for the displacement from their homelands. Besides this, it reveals the insidious strategies that convince colonial societies with regards to their will for “liberation” from the occupiers (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2013 p. 116).

The French philosopher Michel Foucault is considered one of the pioneers that developed an integrated basis for postcolonial theory. For Foucault, Western society’s view of the colonialist is based on power relations within the society of the colonial state. In this sense, the discourse behind it is founded on the idea that colonial powers defined colonised countries as the other according to their knowledge system. Foucault links the relationship of power with colonialism as having a significant influence in penetrating occupied societies. By bringing forward intimidating role of the force that the colonists used against a target group, Foucault states that power has many forms and patterns and cannot be confined to a specific field and that this plurality of power relations is constantly fed by struggles and confrontations (Foucault, 1982, p. 92). As a result, power is in a renewal phase and a state of constant change with the cunning plans of the occupiers and the methods used, whether ideological or by force, to control other territories.

Postcolonial discourse also relies on deconstruction in reading the texts that define the Other under domination. In this regard, Edward Said’s *Orientalism* as a geographical study of Western literature with its substantial effects on the Orient since the eighteenth century (1978, p. 61). In this way, Said dismantles the foundations of colonial and postcolonial discourses and the power relations between these two notions with fruitful insights on the formation of colonial discourse in which the hegemonic political force merges with knowledge and cultural production. Here, the concept of orientalism centers around a common denominator between third-world nations in the face of colonialism and its effects on occupied lands and territories (Thomas, 1992, p. 289). However, Said’s motives were mostly seen as nationalist, and he was accused of

stereotyping the West in his writings and defending his national identity in the face of liberalism and secularism. On the other hand, some critics have also believed that Said does not consider the existence of anti-colonial voices in Western societies (Moore-Gilbert, Stanton, & Maley, 2014, p.90).

Here, it is necessary to mention the French philosopher Franz Fanon (1925-1961), who is considered one of the founders of anti-colonial thought in the twentieth century. As a political activist and supporter of the Algerian liberation, Fanon believed that colonialism was not limited to military rule by force but could also be established through cultural domination. Thus, he called for violent resistance against colonial powers and stressed the need to create a counter-national identity to eliminate the narratives of cultural colonialism (Fanon, 1963 p. 36). In his significant texts *Black Skin and a White Mask* (1952) and *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), Fanon clarified the colonial interests with his extended critiques against the Western colonial regimes, which he considers as symbols of cultural tyranny (Fanon, 1963). For Fanon, colonialism helps to subjugate the East as a centralised system of cultural dominance with its far-reaching impact area through cultural commodities and other products reminiscent of their power.

Another leading scholar of postcolonial theory is Gayatri Spivak (1942). As an Indian scholar and literary critic, Spivak bases her criticism on the universality and authority of Western thought, its bloody colonial history, and its destructive attempt to destroy the characteristics of the cultures occupied by Western colonial powers. As a critical point of debate, Spivak argues that postcolonial theory does not study occupied territories but has become a philosophical theory that forms robust foundations for the colonised communities to find ways to compensate for the cultural losses through literature and arts (Collier, Cooley, Grant, Murav, Nichanian, Spivak, & Etkind, 2003, p. 36).

Finally, as discussed above, Bhabha's debates on the colonial discourse as a continuous dominance on people outside the Western framework, Foucault's emphasis on power relations between the coloniser and the colonised, Said's approach to cultural tyranny of the colonial powers, Spivak's critiques towards the universality of Western thought explore the interdependent relations between dominant and enslaved cultures

in the light of colonialist potentials to erode acculturation of the colonised other with its apparent threats to destabilise it on various spheres of life.

1.3. Postcolonial Theory and Literature

Postcolonial theory, as a literary field and a critical theory of the cultural and political nature, is undeniably essential because it links discourse with the problems of power in the world. From this perspective, postcolonial theorists review the dualism of East and West with regards to political, economic, cultural, and social conflicts arising from the continuation of colonial power after the formal end of an empire. In their work, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post Colonial Literature* (2002), Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin provide a critical conceptual account of a broad area of postcolonial transcription and its relationship to the broad cases of postcolonial culture with their debate on the illegitimacy of colonialism and Orientalism in modern world. For Robert Young, postcolonial theory aims to frame history through the view of the colonised by questioning the “20 forms of hegemony” and the expression of socio-political identities (2004, p. 11).

From this point of view, the most important objective of postcolonial thought is a re-examination of the history of colonialism, in addition to the extent to which this colonialism affected the economic and cultural aspects of the coloniser on this region, which help explain the profound effects of colonialism on identity formation and belonging to a diaspora (Ashcroft ‘Griffiths ‘Tiffin, 2002, p. 1_14). Thus, several postcolonial writers and scholars have works that reflect the pains and grievances of their peoples, their fights for freedom, and identity problems. This explains how postcolonial theory has been developed from “experiences of cultural and national origins, how skin colour affects the life of a person in a city, and how it determines where you are born, the kind of life - privileged and enjoyable, or oppressed and exploited - that you will lead in this world” (Young, 2005, p. 7). After the independence of the colonised lands, many postcolonial writers have addressed their disastrous past full of tragedies and oppression under European colonial powers with attempts to extend the scope of equality and freedom by bridging the gap between cultures and people (Western and non-Western). In his book *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature: Migrant Metaphors*, Elleke Boehmer refers to this motive as an act of

excavating communal memory and trying to find a way of uniting different facets of their culture under the remnants of suppression and isolation (1995, pp. 190-191).

In this context, postcolonial writers support hostility against colonial rule and its achievements. With their extended critiques against the popular wisdom regarding the victimisation of the colonised peoples, they influence the ways literary texts are read, national and international incidents are understood, and political implications arise from narratives written by colonisers on occupied lands. By doing so, they bring a progressive aspect to literary production with initiatives on dismantling the potentials of empowerment through hybridity and diaspora.

1.4. Cultural Hybridity

This section focuses on the notion of hybridity, including what concepts and scenarios may be utilised and addressed, as well as the extent to which this concept can be regarded from the perspective of postcolonial theory. It is possible that hybridity discussions have been centred on identity and culture, in part due to the emergence of postcolonial discourse to discover specific answers as to the structural framework of cultural identity and the culture in which it rests. Within this section, the notion of hybridity is stressed to reveal the hybrid structure of cultures with regards to the cultural implications of globalisation.

The word hybrid means a cross between two distinct species of any class; yet, it is not deemed positive as for Western colonisers it represents the corruption of the supposedly 'pure' white race (Kuortti & Nyman, 2007, p. 4). Basing their colonial discourses on a persistent separation between Western whiteness and the blackness of the colonial countries, Western people maintained that marriage between themselves and blacks should not take place so that the purity of the white race could continue, that is to say, they wished to avoid 'contamination' by the black race. Theodore Waitz (1863) claims that under racial categories, the black are condemned to occupy an inferior position where the white ones are allowed to tame, train, and utilise them. Waitz attempts to portray that there is no way the black community can abandon its lower place among people; therefore, they cannot acquire the level of the white despite their huge efforts to exist. Contrary to the belief that science always acts without bias or disinformation, the racist discourses of Western science might be considered to be

supported by prejudiced fallacies built in a fixed hierarchical connection between races (Loomba, 2005). This remark illustrates why white colonists so passionately resisted any racial boundary crossing and intermarriage, which heightens their anxieties about whether or not their racist worldview is viable.

Evaluating the effects of Britain's violent approach towards hybrid races on the Indian citizens, who also opposed this racial mixing because of their hostility against the British, Pieterse claims that while whites and blacks were considered to be formed by God, mixed-race people were the work of the Devil. Signs at the time would state "No entrance for dogs and half-castes" (2004, p. 90). This data supports one of the outcomes of racial mixing in the colonial era suggesting that the hybrid races were not only resisted and rejected by the Western colonial states but also by the descendants of Western colonialism. This severe opposition of the colonising cultures to the hybrid races contemplates the compulsion, tyranny, and torture performed by the Western powers, which produced these societies.

Given that languages also tend to be impacted by one another through loaning and borrowing particular words, one would presumably suppose that they may absorb phrases from multiple other languages during their development over time. Bakhtin splits the idea of hybridisation into two categories. For Bakhtin, organic hybridisation includes unconscious progression over time in which a language or culture incubates various materials from different languages or cultures while intentional crossbreeding means a truly conscious process in which assorted components of the marginal culture seek to fit themselves into a homogeneous framework and show "difference, estrangement, and heterogeneity" versus "sameness" and "homogenisation" (Moslund, 2010, pp. 21-22).

Papastergiadis believes that "the action of culture, as implied by etymological ties to 'gardening,' has been usually connected with the 'cultivation' of land." Every culture has an origin point and will then find its position" (2000, p. 103). This concept, in which culture exposes its distinctive traits in a certain area, implies a natural and indigenous cultural relationship with a particular place where that culture is confined, experienced, and consumed. Wallerstein, for example, defines culture as the way in which one culture distinguishes itself from others. It symbolises what is shared inside

the group that is not shared with the outside world (1990, pp. 31–32). This perspective brings emphasis to the communal part of culture, and its different qualities that make individuals distinct from others.

Regarding the notion of identity, it can be considered that two primary trends have been noted to emphasise what identity consists of, the traits it displays, and if it maintains a steady manner of creation. The first position embraces ‘primordialism’ or ‘essentialism’ that identities may stay “fixed and organic - something pre-given, predestined, or “natural” (Croucher, 2004, p. 36). In this concept, there is no evolution or variability in the identity structure; there is no progress towards a developmental path. Thus, the essentialist position maintains that identity has an immutable feature that is the essence of it by with some core qualities that do not change throughout time. The second position pertains to the argument that identities are essentially biologically fixed but two people from the same group do not represent similar features, sentiments, behaviours, etc (Wise, 2008). Therefore, identities cannot be classed and organised according to any fundamental essences since they do not possess any basic trait that stays constant and unchanging. For Hall, history, power and culture probably shape identities’ structures and traits. Therefore, identities cannot be asserted with certainty, immutability, and stability owing to the uneven and changing features of those components. That is, power and history do not obey a consistent or logical course of growth, inversely, they continuously disturb and attack the core and stability of identities.

Besides the postcolonial hybridity claim from the perspective of culture and identity, Homi Bhabha demonstrates that hybridity indicates that colonial discourses on the hierarchical subtleties and borders between cultures must be challenged so that efforts to discriminate and dominate would fail because of the ambiguity of cultural boundaries (1994). According to Bhabha’s statement, hybridity originates as a notion that leaves a subversive influence on Western colonial discourses and the established line between colonised and coloniser. For him, if the Western rhetoric about the need to entirely eliminate and westernise Eastern culture and civilization was genuine and proper, then any indication of Eastern culture has not existed till now owing to colonialism’s repressive and destructive character. While colonial hegemony, despite brutality and force, aimed to replace the indigenous culture of the colonised countries

by consuming them, this was not achieved due to the reverse impact of colonialism and the growth of crossbreeding as a way of resistance. Bhabha emphasises that hybridity reverses the impacts of colonial oppression so that repressed knowledge returns to the primary discourse (1994, p. 114). In this way, hybrid identities reflect the resurrection of the original culture of the colonial countries whose cultural ideals are attempted to be repressed and denied by Western countries. However, the total restoration of the native culture of the colonial peoples does not appear attainable owing to the fluidity and unstructured nature of the culture.

Bhabha's concept of postcolonial culture and identity apparently delineates the responsibilities of these two poles via a fundamental understanding. A simple split of global culture under any categorisation between the developed and developing world or core and those at the margins cannot be regarded as acceptable (Hardt & Negri, 2001, p. 54). Because the roles and qualities taken by cultures are not always stable and their connections are founded on dynamism and interaction rather than a rigidly stereotyped foundation. While they are sensitive to influences from other cultures and prefer to absorb them effortlessly, cultures remain continually disturbed and tormented by their past components. Bhabha admits that this area constitutes fluidity and transition for humans to inhabit, and refers to the Third Space, establishing the grave conditions that eliminate the fixed meanings in culture (1994, p. 37). This causes cultural identities to become so flexible that societies cannot continually keep any identifiable traits with challenges that the limits of the self in relation to history and cultural representation, of others (Byrne, 2009, pp. 149-150). From this assertion, the third space acts as a mechanism to allow disenfranchised, oppressed, minor, and marginal voices barred from speaking by dominant Western forces to be occasionally heard loudly rather than being withdrawn and exterminated.

As such, Bhabha's notion of hybridity illustrates that oppressed cultures may be pushed into the peripheral locations of the light in order to give alternatives to dominant Western assertions of 'pure' identity (1994). In contrast to Western humanism and Cartesian rationality, which encourage the white man to brazenly and overconfidently use knowledge as a means of controlling the world, postcolonial discourse on cultural hybridity allows for the existence of different centres of culture (Gandi, 1998, p. 41). The cornerstone of Bhabha's argument, therefore, hinges on

rejecting the Western notion of ambivalence and double prejudice about white vs. black and challenges the extent to which this knowledge of Western origins turns out to be universal and genuine. His approach is quite similar to that of Derrida, who made it evident that no constant relationship between signifiers and signified exists and that signs may take on multiple meanings continually formed and deconstructed without any certainty. Derrida's thesis that signs work free from any binary opposition may be extended to signs and symbols of cultural identities in the work of Bhabha, who similarly based his theory on the shifting capacity of cultural signals that do not stay in their former position and that always claim new qualities.

In light of their unclear and uncertain status, hybrids raise the question of whether or not they possess any benefits or drawbacks. We may suppose that the fact that hybridity exposes racism's weakness and indefensibility by pushing for reflection in an ongoing manner to terminate racial conflicts, antagonism, and discrimination (Young, 2005, p. 20). It would be senseless to claim that one race is superior to the others and that the civilisation of the superior race must be forced onto others if the rhetoric of hybridisation is accepted and endorsed across the globe. If we contrast Bhabha's theory of hybridisation, we may see how hybridisation generates no new stable form but rather something more like "hybridisation as raceless chaos" (Young, 2005, pp. 23-24). From that perspective, it's clear that the hybrid form is prone to crises because of a lack of belonging, ambiguity, and uncertainty that comes with hybridisation. This dilemma and hesitancy are common among mixed-race individuals, which means they are likely to face this issue for the rest of their life.

1.5. Diaspora

The term diaspora is used in postcolonial studies to understand forced dispersal, migration movements, displacement, resettlement, and the construction of international societies in a new territory. In her book *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities*, Avtar Brah states that diaspora "embodies the idea of centre, place, and 'home' where dispersal takes place. It evokes images of multiple journeys" (1996, p. 178). Brah stresses that not every journey can be considered as part of the concept of diaspora because she considers that "Diaspora journeys are mainly about settling down, and putting roots elsewhere" (1996, p. 179). In other words, diaspora is

the resettlement of a group of formerly colonised people who build their lives under better conditions in the country that formerly colonised them in the hope of a better life.

Furthermore, Robin Cohen defines the notion of global diaspora as a group of people who has settled in a new territory yet still acknowledge that their home country and culture have a draw for them. This pull may come through religion, customs, or language (1997, p. 9). This association with the old country can be observed in the first and second generations born to immigrant families in the host country. The shared history of their families impacts the formation of the identity of a second-generation who is aware of its roots and can feel it is inevitable to be connected to their country of origin even if they have never been there. However, rather than seeing the location of the immigrant subjects as the emergence of new possibilities and the building of a multicultural society in which diversity is celebrated, the colonising countries may view discriminate against them. Since the members of diaspora live in a fantasy homeland far from their original homeland, they face many problems regarding their languages, cultures, and ethnicities. They are considered as potential threats to the purity of the white race. As to the existence of the black in Britain being marked out by difference, Mirza notes that “to be Black in Britain is to share a common structural location; a racial location” (2009, p. 3).

In this manner, racism is generally centred around colour in postcolonial culture. Because body colour symbolises negativity/positivity, inferiority/superiority, and exclusion/inclusion in the host country. As McLeod asserts, “diaspora peoples often remain isolated and excluded from a sense of belonging to the ‘new country’, and their cultural practices suffer from ridicule and discrimination” (2000, p. 140). While former colonists saw themselves as part of the motherland and assumed they shared similar cultural values and had strong ties to the British, citizens of colonial countries were also encouraged to see, the political centre of the empire, as their home (Paul, 1997, p. 114). That is why, the displaced diaspora members tend to see Britain as a land of opportunity and wish to remain there because they suppose Britain is their mother country. There is no doubt that the idea of a motherland is ideal for them. However, the reality after arriving in Britain does not live up to the expectations of immigrants. These immigrants expect to live in better conditions, find a well-paid job,

obtain a higher education, and settle in a suitable place, yet Britain looks very different. They are disappointed about the “motherland” that they encounter. Upon entering the country, immigrants are not prepared to “be treated as members of a separate realm of Britishness” based on their culture and race (Paul, 1997, p. 120). Contrary to their desire, they suddenly realise that they are already seen as others, not British, and find themselves unwelcome despite being brainwashed into making Britain home through colonial education.

Clifford explains that those coming in mass migrations are placed in lowly positions where they remain due to entrenched racial exclusion (1997, p. 311). After discrimination, they form diaspora communities with their ‘similar’ races. Diaspora members experience loss, and a lack of self-purpose leading to the establishing of “either fixed or unchangeable uses of space or vague unspecified and ultimately forlorn spatial arrangements” (1997, p. 22). These feelings make them wonder what it means to be in their home country and whether they belong to their country of origin or the country to which they have immigrated. As McLeod’s theme of home suggests, ‘home’ welcomes and envelops us in safety, yet when we are far from that home as in the case of migrants, the idea of home may become different (2000, p. 142). In this context, home refers to where human beings feel peace, comfort, and belonging. However, the idea of a home becomes very problematic for the diaspora after being discriminated from the society.

Being away from home results in a dilemma: They are neither rooted in their homeland nor in their homeland. Being sandwiched between two places, immigrants perfect their home while they have no intention of returning there. Brah expresses that a home is a mythical place of desire in the imagination of the diaspora. It is a place of no return, even if it is possible to visit the geographical area, which is seen as the place of “origin” (1996, p. 188). Thus, the concept of home becomes not only a physical space for them but also a mental image that continues to influence their current lives. As McLeod argues, “this separation of past and present, between here and there, makes “home” seem elusive in time and space, available to return only through a work of fiction” (2000, p. 149).

The immigrants in a diaspora are preoccupied with a sense of loss, isolation,

and rootlessness because they are divided between a painful past and a lost present in which they connect and separate; it is as if they are standing on a threshold. Therefore, the meaning of being at home becomes an inevitable question for members of diaspora communities. Feelings of belonging and identity formation and a loss of a place lead them to be uniquely uprooted from their homeland and isolated from their motherland.

The next chapter will discuss the novel *White Teeth* by Zadie Smith. Through this, the most prominent personalities subjected to hybridization will be identified, and what are the means used by these personalities to reach a hybrid personality will be. In addition, the personalities who failed to proceed in a new culture far from their original culture, which was often because these personalities remained adherent, they were rejected by society, or often they did not find a mechanism that would tire the host countries to deal with such issues.

2. HYBRIDITY AND DIASPORA IN *WHITE TEETH*

This chapter discusses the novel *White Teeth* by Zadie Smith in the light of postcolonial theory with references to hybridity, diaspora and immigration. As is well known, identity, immigration, ethnicity, diaspora, cultural hybridity, and belonging are the most significant issues in Smith's works. Therefore, this chapter tackles the concepts of identity, diaspora, nostalgia, and exile from the position of contemporary postcolonial studies. Three families and three generations are discussed in Smith's book *White Teeth*. The Iqbals are a Bangladeshi family; Jones is an English man, his wife is from Jamaica, and the Chalfens are a Caucasian English family descended from Jews. Throughout *White Teeth*, many discussions relating to hybridity can be seen in the dialogues of the three families and across the three generations, who are trying to preserve their traditions in the city, different from how they used to live in their original homeland. Samad in *White Teeth* is an example of a character who has been through this as one of Smith's characters that directly experienced the diaspora due to British colonial history. He is one of the second-generation immigrants who find themselves unsettled in the country of their birth but remain unable to connect with their parents' homeland in the novel. Born in the UK, Irie, Millat, and Magid are now compelled to reinterpret their position as members of an imagined society in the diaspora.

Smith's *White Teeth* has generated many discussions. This chapter will explain the discourse of hybridity by analysing Smith's work through Bhabha's postcolonial standpoint, starting from the essential premise of cultural difference. In Bhabha's view, hybridisation suggests that colonial discourses arguing that subtleties and boundaries between cultures exist hierarchically must be challenged for attempts at distinguishing and controlling to fail because the ambiguity of cultural boundaries is so difficult to define and control (1994). Hybridity, according to Bhabha, emerges as a term that subverts Western colonial discourses and the straight line between coloniser and colonised.

In this manner, *White Teeth* explores the complexities of postcolonial immigrant identity in multicultural London via the prism of family history, ancestry, and genealogy. The city is home to many nationalities, religions, and cultures due to the continuous influx of immigration. Cultural interactions and collisions in London

reflect the city's diversity and intermingled nature. Thus, it provides potent bases of discussion between characters so different from one another that they may transcend the confines of historical and colonial discourse. Only after arriving in London do they reconcile themselves with the cultural identity they were searching for predates the colonial encounter and their migration there. Due to the reflections of postcolonial immigrant identity in the novel, the coloniser's exclusionary rhetoric and cultural conflict may be resolved into multiplicity and interplay in Smith's narrative line.

Using the Iqbals and Joneses/Bowdens as case studies, Zadie Smith explores the complex social ties among two immigrant families that are both multi-ethnic in origin. A nameless omniscient narrator swings back and forth between members of each family, none of whom are put at the centre, providing an insight into the tensions inside and between these families and how they reproduce conceptions of binary and 'impurity.' (Tew, 2014 p.164) Both the Iqbal and Jones families' experiences highlight ethnic and cultural tensions and the futility of attempting to belong to a certain culture. When immigrants' cultural and ethnic identities, established before immigration, are reasserted and acknowledged, these problems are alleviated.

Colonial history is intertwined with individuals' tales throughout the narrative. The Iqbals' and Bowdens' ancestors are originally from Bangladesh and Jamaica, both conquered by the British. In Riley M. Townsend's *The European Migrant Crisis* (2015), immigration is explained as a movement that took place until the mid-1950s, beginning in the mid-1700s after the British Empire oversaw large swathes of the globe. Especially after World War II, many immigrants came to the UK from nations the British had once colonised and recently set free, mostly from Asia and the Caribbean (Townsend, 2015, p. 11).

In parallel with what Townsend asserts, Bhabha states that there exists a moment in the journey where time and space connect and form an intersectional identity encompassing the past and present of the individual and the ways in which they are both included and excluded in society (Smith, 2000, p. 152). The historical connection between cultural displacement and colonial rule in the indigenous nations emphasises this situation clearly (Bhabha, 1994, p. 1). While the Bowden and Iqbal families are culturally and racially ambiguous in their home and host countries, they

watch British soap operas that narrate their departure to the colonies in a way that they watch television in one of the regions of Bangladesh. This switching between viewing programs from both nations can be described as a mirroring of the move between the country of origin and adoptive home. Even once settled, there remains a back-and-forth between the homeland and the adopted country. Despite the ubiquity of this experience, as Smith notes, “There is no proper term for it” (Smith, 2000, p. 152).

Trauma can play on repeat, just as TV reruns, and the Iqbal family are unable to break the cycle of being on repeat. John McLeod elaborates on the unique status of immigrants in the chapter “Diaspora Identities” in *Beginning Postcolonialism* (2000), stating that they are better placed than anyone else to know that no worldview is ever pure, but rather they are hybrid and fractured. He continues that being a migrant separated from one’s roots might be a painful experience, yet simultaneously it is a status of possibility and promise that allows new ways of viewing and interacting with the world (McLeod, 2000, p. 215).

London’s cosmopolitan milieu in *White Teeth* frees the immigrant from reductionist dualistic conceptions. Negotiation between differing points of view is common in the city. According to Bhabha in *The Location of Culture*, migrants, minorities, and the diaspora come to the city to “alter the history of a nation” (1994, p. 243). That is, new identities and social dynamics emerge within the diaspora. The third space arises when hybridity and coexisting cultural heterogeneity enable postcolonial immigrant identities to release themselves from the coloniser’s binary narrative, which characterises the native as inferior.

The third space constitutes as a melting pot of their original and adoptive homes as in the case of Samad Iqbal, the head of the household in the Iqbal family. Alsana Iqbal, his young Bangladeshi wife, and their sons, the twins Millat and Magid, make up the Iqbal family’s four members. According to the narrator, Samad Iqbal, a server at an Indian restaurant, is a middle-aged man. As a devout Muslim, he seems to be fixated on the heroic tales of his historical great-grandfather. Because of his status as an immigrant, he seeks purity in the past to determine a feeling of home in the new nation (Walters, 2008, p.99). Furthermore, he wants to be entrenched in one culture and age, but he must learn that this desire is futile and that cultural hybridity is a fact

of life. Because of his unwillingness to follow through on his religious convictions, he is seen as being both hypocritical and inconsistent.

Alsana Begum Iqbal, Samad's wife, is shown as a strong lady open to new experiences. Begum, a feminine version of 'bey'(gentleman), is given to Muslim women of high status and noble descent; it emphasises their strong and resolute nature as an official in a high position (Walters, 2008, p. 97-98). Begum, as a character from the novel, believes in the potential for change when she refuses to adhere to her husband's ideals or restrictions. Her awareness of hybridity and cultural acculturation help reconcile binary oppositions in the Iqbal home. Adding insult to injury, the conservative Samad has a friend called Archibald Jones, an Englishman depicted in the book as unable to make a choice without flipping a coin. In Archibald's family, Clara, a woman of Jamaican descent, further underlines the mixed-race atmosphere. When it comes to finding a place in the world, their daughter Irie Jones has a difficult time because of her mixed-race parentage, yet her name connotes a sense of calm and serenity (Smith, 2000, p. 64).

Following Samad's immigration to London in 1972 with his family, these Bangladeshi and Anglo-Jamaican families share a neighbourhood. The author Smith creates a hybrid world by presenting the overlapping lives of two ethnically distinct families in North London. In her article "*The politics of everyday hybridity: Zadie Smith's White Teeth*", Moss suggests that Smith has crafted a story that neither glorifies nor denounces hybridity while referring to its ordinary, everyday nature (2003, p. 1). As Tracey L. Walters points out, hybridisation has blurred the boundaries of race and ethnicity within England (Walters, 2008, p. 321). As a result, London offers a mix of ethnicities and languages.

However, immigrants are alarmed by the clash of cultures and beliefs, so they want a sense of routine and predictability. The modification process threatens cultural identity. Because there are so many different things to value, they are constantly being tested. This flux compels people to look for a recollection of their ancestors. Because of their cultural apprehension, families become a significant topic of conversation for migrants. In re-examining their ideas and cultural norms, natives are liberated and allowed to seek an identity. In their quest to find a culture, they discover that their

origins are tainted and that there is no authentic culture. As they come to grips with their in-between status in the multicultural host community, they realise that their original culture is not united but hybrid and varied.

The next section will deal with how the characters have discovered their identity in the shadow of a new culture and the impressions and behaviours that this culture imposes on them regarding their contradiction and congruence, as similarities between cultures may not cause disturbances as in matters that contradict each other.

2.1. Exploring The Postcolonial Self in A Hybrid Culture

The immigration of Samad Iqbal from Bangladesh to the United Kingdom directly relates to his rootlessness and is embodied in his cultural dislocation. While adjusting to new cultural standards, he suffers from cultural anxiety and cannot let go of the past. So, he starts to look for his ancestors under the “Eternal! Infinite! indivisible!” narrative constructed by colonialists (Smith, 2000, p. 126). He relies on pre-established criteria to feel secure as a first-generation immigrant in a diverse community.

In *White Teeth*, the first-generation immigrants’ condition reminds us of losing cultural and religious traditions due to the deterritorialization that occurs in adult life way after being mature as individuals. Even though these people have relocated to a new nation, they carry qualities from their origins to maintain a sense of identity in the face of assimilation policies. Zadie Smith uses Samad’s preoccupation with the past to speak to the theme of belonging and deterritorialization with direct references to the experiences of first-generation immigrants who do not view themselves as cultural hybrids but as members of a single generation.

Despite Samad’s aspirations to make changes with his morals and beliefs, his roots are unstable and do not guarantee stability. He recounts how he is not really from India but Bengal by making a division between Pakistan and Bangladesh (Smith, 2000, p. 133). As such, he is unable to reclaim a united self that never existed, to begin with. As an immigrant, Samad Iqbal, therefore, is the character where all these hybrid origins come into existence in the novel even before he landed in London.

Clara Bowden also reflects this hybrid identity formation in the novel with her mother, Hortense Bowden, who immigrated to England from her birthplace Kingston,

Jamaica in 1972. Jamaica is not very different from Bengal in terms of colonial processes that it went through in the course of its history. Starting from the European immigrants establishing a slave-based agricultural economy in Jamaica in the early eighteenth century and the deportation of millions of enslaved Africans from West Africa to this area, British and African cultures intertwined on the island, resulting in a fusion of beliefs and practices that resulted in a new civilisation (Mintz, 2017, p. 69). Her marriage to Archie Jones, an Englishman is reminiscent of the cross-border movement of immigrants that multiplies the fusion of historical facts, languages, and ideologies in the UK.

In that, their daughter Irie can thrive in both cultures since she is a second-generation immigrant born in the host country. Zadie Smith places particular focus on a rising resistance to and understanding of one's own hybridity while discussing the experiences of second-generation immigrants like Irie. Irie, the uprooted postcolonial subject in quest of stability, aspires to be a part of a single cultural heritage since they are always changing (Walters, 2008, p.16). While searching for a relation to her cultural anxieties, she realises that origins and identities are interwoven.

In conclusion, the hybridity and postcolonial self are very much related with each other in Smith's *White Teeth*. As the characters in *White Teeth* try to integrate into society but are exposed to crises, these crises lie either as a result of facing themselves or as a result of meeting them through the community. For example, first-generation immigrants carry traits from their original culture as they move forward in preoccupation with preserving this culture in the shadow of a new culture that conflicts with their own. As for the second generation, their suffering is considered the least because they were already raised in one culture, although it differs from the parents' culture, as in Clara.

2.2. Positioning The Past at The Core of Cultural Identity

Based on Samad's difficulties adapting to his new life as an immigrant, his primary concern is finding his old home. In *Beginning Postcolonialism*, John McLeod writes that migration may mean displacement and fragmented identities for migrants and their families (2000, p. 261). Rather than adapting, Iqbal searches for his origins and refuses to accept English culture. After all, "your history is not mine, and your

reality is not mine, and your answer - it is not my solution,” he concludes (Smith, 2000, p. 150). As in the case of ‘split’ people who are caught in between two civilisations, Iqbal attempts to heal his identity by grounding it in the past, which is rooted in his memory. Here, Schlesinger’s comments that “history is to the country more what memory is to the person” (Schlesinger, 2007, p. 45) reveal how those who are not sure of their past become lost individuals with a lack of ability to plan their futures. That is, Iqbal’s questions of “[w]hat will I do? Return to Bengal? Or to Delhi? Who would have a British person like that there? England? Who would want an Indian like that?” (Smith, 2000, p. 112) strongly support his lost individuality in the novel.

As a Bengali Muslim, Samad feels as if he cannot fit in the land he moved to, and as a newcomer, he does not feel as connected to his culture as he did before. His fixation with his great-grandfather Mangal Pande, who opened fire in the Indian Mutiny against British authority in 1857, demonstrates how much he yearns for roots and solace in that period of history when India was battling for independence from its coloniser. “The story of Mangal Pande is not funny to Samad,” he says. He thinks that “he [Mangal Pande] is the tickle in the sneeze... the founder of modern India, the big historical cheese” (Smith, 2000, p. 226). Because of this, he holds tight to the legend of Pande, in which his ancestor is told to be a hero who stood up to the English and started an independent, modern India. In the line below, Iqbal says that he wants to be known for his true self; the dearest thing to him was his blood. It was logical for Samad to discuss things holy to him in holy places, and the holiest thing for him was the tale of his great-grandfather (Smith, 2000, p. 250).

To preserve himself from fading, he guards his history with vigilance. If you have nothing but your blood to go on, “every drop of it counts; it must be scrupulously protected,” he says. It must be protected against the attacks of those who would undermine it. A battle must be waged for it (Smith, 2000, p. 255). In his quest for purportedly natural roots, he uses the symbol of blood to express his need for a sense of permanence and security. Culture and cultural identity are formed, but the allusion to blood will eventually obscure this fact. In Iqbal’s view, however, “tradition was cultural, and cultural roots were excellent, they were unadulterated ideals. Even if he is not capable of living or growing in accordance with their rules and regulations, “roots were roots and excellent” (Smith, 2000, p. 193). As an immigrant, he has

difficulty dealing with his desire to retain his family's history and culture. A search for roots is something Gayatri Spivak scorns in *The Postcolonial Critic: Interviews, Strategies, Dialogues* (1990): "if there's one thing I utterly mistrust... it's people hunting for roots" (Spivak, 1990, p. 93). Iqbal is unable to find a home for himself in multicultural England because of his attempts to maintain his culture and heritage. He becomes a hypocrite due to his inability to commit to a single religious tradition and the resulting conflict in his life.

Samad Iqbal has an affair with Poppy Burt-Jones in the chapter "Temptations of Samad Iqbal." It seems impossible for them to connect because so much troubled history had gone before them (Smith, 2000, p. 112), producing an internal contradiction for Samad. Samad and Poppy, the music instructor for Samad's son, Magid, meet at school. Poppy questions Samad about "a closed-mouth adoration of the Creator" (Smith, 2000, p. 160) and states that the same feeling of giving yourself to a creator does not exist in Western culture. Poppy then explains that she admires the self-restraint shown by Samad and people like him (Smith, 2000, p. 160). She states that she is interested in Indian culture and appears to be objectifying Samad's cultural background (Smith, 2000, p. 160). On the other hand, Samad is not Indian and lacks the self-control Poppy believes all Indians have. At some point, he moves frantically to meet Poppy Burt-Jones' verbose mouth with his own lips, but he is unable to recall the exact timing (Smith, 2000, p. 160).

The fact that he is unable to achieve purity results from his being caught in the middle between his conservative ideals and the desires that they arouse in him. He questions how he can show his sons "the correct route" when he is not certain about his sense of self (Smith, 2000, p. 189). Samad is motivated to construct his boys' roots to correct his defect as he is taken to the ocean's depths by the vixen Poppy Burt-Jones. (Smith, 2000, p. 193). His affection for an English lady, a situation that threatens his beliefs, creates an area where concepts of polarity must be worked out. Although he longs for a clear separation between the West and East, Samad will never be able to attain it (Dawson, 2007, p. 164). With the help of Poppy, Alsana Iqbal, and Archie Jones, he established himself in the third space created by hybridity.

In conclusion, through this concept, the past plays a significant role in the lives

of immigrants. It effectively impacts building a personality that can be conservative of the original culture, and in return, can live in a second culture that may conflict with its own. For example, Samad is trying to preserve his cultural heritage. However, even with his cultural heritage, he is lost and hesitant and is often reluctant to say that he is Indian or Bengali. Being attached to the past and searching for a way to preserve it is a waste of time, as with Samad, because he cannot provide a home for himself in England and is always busy preserving his cultural heritage.

2.3. Identity Formation Between Transformation and Alienation in Diaspora

According to custom, Samad's marriage to Alsana Iqbal was planned long before the latter was even born. "I got married to Samad Iqbal on the same evening of the same day I met him," says Alsana, implying that they had no time to get to know one another (Smith, 2000, p. 66). At the age of 19, she and her husband relocated to London, and as an immigrant, she could adjust and work through cultural barriers because of her youth. Despite adapting to the new country, she can question the idea of origins since she is caught between two cultures. Do you think English people are out there to paraphrase what she said? English? Even so, is it possible? Is this a dream of any sort? Smith (2000, p. 236) points out, unlike Samad, she recognises that no civilisation is perfect and has no desire to cling to the past for solace or stability. As a result, Alsana is shown to be a character who is incapable of making solid judgments. Here, enunciation of the feminine subject is thought to be vague and fluid. Attributing these concepts to the female subject, Smith overcomes the bounds set by the patriarchal system. As Hélène Cixous, Keith Cohen and Paula Cohen argues in *Laugh of Medusa* (1976), "women...are more fluid, more flowing, more unstable than males" (Cixous, Cohen, Paula, 1976, p. 122). This is the first appearance of Alsana as women are more adaptable than men – that they bend to the situations they meet easier than men do – so they are like liquid that can fit wherever it goes. Unlike Samad, Alsana is able to adapt and live in a multicultural society. When he tells her to pay attention to her heritage, she wonders, "My own heritage? There must be something wrong with my husband's Bengali heritage" (Smith, 2000, p. 106).

There are several reasons why this is so. Alsana opposes Samad's proposal to transfer one of their boys to Bangladesh. She advises him to quit controlling everyone

and everything around him since he has no true roots to reconnect with. She wants to be clear that their second-generation son Magid would act differently as he was London-born (Smith, 2000, p. 102). Although she was born into a pre-arranged marriage, “To Alsana’s mind, the real difference between people was not colour. Nor did it lie in gender, faith, and their relative ability to dance to a syncopated rhythm or open their fists to reveal a handful of gold coins” (Smith, 2000, p. 175). As a result, she is free of preconceptions and can work through the social binaries in her own life. She wears “running shoes and a sari” (Smith, 2000, p. 166), and she creates an identity free of binary discourse by blending (cultural) contrasts.

A multicultural bond is further enhanced by Samad’s acquaintance with Archie Jones, an Englishman. *White Teeth* again shows that diversity and coexistence can be achieved by telling the experiences of two racially and culturally diverse friends. Alfred Archibald Jones and Samad Mial Iqbal’s relationship begins in “The Root Canals.” They initially connected in an armoured vehicle in Eastern Europe at the tail-end of World War II. Samad fought for a country although it was “not his” when he did so (Smith, 2000, p. 95), and in doing so, he demonstrated his ‘fidelity’ to the colonial country that rules his own. A profoundly ironic circumstance is that the host community, who could not distinguish him from anyone else on the street, (Smith, 2000, p. 95) does not accept Samad as culturally British. As Archie’s enduring friendship with him seems to be improbable and appears to be in the surface level, it is inconvenient as well due to physical closeness forgotten by the Englishman when he is back home among people of his own social group (Smith, 2000, p. 41).

As a result of his wife Ophelia’s recent divorce from Archie Jones, the Englishman tries to take his own life, according to the novel (Smith, 2000, p. 8). Impulses and coincidences are the driving force in his existence. The coin is constantly in his pocket, and he flips it anytime he is on the verge of making an important choice. Since Archibald Jones has “no objectives, no dreams, no ambitions,” he is the “no white knight” (Smith, 2000, p. 48). Because of his established racial status in society, he does not seek solace in the past for consolation. His cultural identity is safe because he has never been forced to relocate. “We’re the chaff, son, we’re the chaff,” he said in his own words. “I’ve never had a problem with it, to be honest. Nevertheless, I’m proud, as you well know. Stock from a good family in England” (Smith, 2000, p. 84).

However, despite his nationalist views, his first marriage to an Italian woman and then a Jamaican woman, Clara Bowden, he becomes friends with Samad, a Bangladeshi man in the UK. Because of their differences, Samad and Archie wouldn't be close friends under normal circumstances. For Archie, "sort of believed people should live together" (Smith, 2000, p. 159). However, Samad sees "coexistence" as a euphemism for "assimilation". "I'm not one of your English matey boys. My name is Samad Miah Iqbal. Not Sam. Not Sammy. And not-God-forbid-Samuel. It is Samad" (Smith, 2000, p. 112). Even the tiniest alteration in his name frightens him because he fears being tainted by England.

Both men are conscious of the cultural differences between England and Bangladesh, despite their ability to form a relationship. A man prefers to get to know his bride-to-be first, Archie remarks. "Where you come from, boiling veggies till they're mushy is a common practice there," Samad points out, "this does not imply that it is an excellent concept" (Smith, 2000, p. 98). Another example of a clash between the two is explained by Samad as follows: "I don't eat [pork] for the same reason you as an Englishman will never truly satisfy a woman" (Smith, 2000, p. 96). When Archie questions him why this is so, Samad states it to be a matter of culture, perhaps even something in their very bones. The mention of bones, like the preceding mention of blood, will serve to solidify Samad's cultural heritage and origins (Mintz, 2017, p. 276). However, in a novel on historical discourse, the significant differences across their English and Bangladeshi cultural identities are addressed with a pluralistic approach.

Their contrasting perspectives is also reflected in Mangal Pande's narrative. Samad regards Pande as a national hero, whereas Archie regards him as a boozed-up, religious fanatic who resisted colonial rule in the Indian subcontinent. In the narrative, Pande's actual identity remains a mystery. The presentation of conflicting viewpoints questions the trustworthiness of historical narratives, as well. Samad and Archie try to find a compromising centre point between the historical 'truth' and their own beliefs. The two men repeatedly argue over the same issue, partly because Archie would not budge from his position regardless of new evidence. As the text states, he is resolute once he has discovered the truth about Pande. In his digging, he finds that "Pande's only claim to fame, as Archie was at pains to point out, was his etymological gift to

the English language by way of the word ‘Pandy’” (Smith, 2000, p. 112). In the Oxford dictionary, Archie finds that Pandy is a colloquial term referring to “the surname of the first mutineer amongst the high-caste sepoys in the Bengal army” and had become a term for any such soldier who revolted or mutinied. (Smith, 2000, p. 112)

According to Archie, Pande is a traitor, coward, and stupid because the OED also describes him as such. Due to Archie’s distorted perspective on historical figures and events, Samad becomes more possessive and protective of the past, including Pande’s role as a leader of the Bengali revolt against the coloniser. Samad objects to the characterisation of his great-grandfather in such terms, although he concedes that he was indeed a mutineer, which is something to be proud of Samad. He warns Archie that although the term exists, it is not necessarily a true depiction of Pande. He does, however, make a concession: his great-grandfather was a mutineer, a fact of which is proud (Smith, 2000, p. 112).

Samad also states that Archie’s definition is antiquated and therefore does not apply; his great-grandfather was neither coward nor a traitor. Samad claims that the stories of history have changed and continue to alter due to decolonisation. It is now “out of currency” to use colonial language that stigmatises local rebellion. He, on the other hand, is unwilling to adapt. His identity dilemma in a heterogeneous culture is accentuated by his continual attempt to build a personal history, his great-grandfather’s and his own, as linked to his country’s war for freedom. Mangal Pande’s heroic tales haunt him here, and he cannot shake the feeling that he does not belong. He displays a resolute refusal to consider other viewpoints. The contrasting tales of Mangal Pande question Samad’s identity. Refusing to let go of Pande’s status as an embodiment of purportedly immutable origins has left him with little choice but to embrace the fluidity and unreliability of the past.

In the end, Samad can come to terms with his past. The Jones and Iqbal families meet during a public symposium, The Future Mouse Project, held at the Perret Institute in London, in the chapter “The Final Space.” Persons who wish to find unprejudiced space may do so in the conference room, which Smith (2000) describes as being used as a neutral meeting space (p. 517). By bringing all families together in this space, Smith foreshadows differences, blunders, misunderstandings, worries, and resistance

rather than presenting divided opposition. The experiment's goal is to alter a mouse's DNA to treat cancer and manage to age. "Genetic defeat" has been eliminated, and we are no longer the "victims of the random" (Smith, 2000, p. 10). The mouse represents the initiative as a symbol of the potential for change. A genetically modified organism is not affected by its history. As a result, it is free from essentialist interpretations of history that impose arbitrary divisions. During the Future Mouse conference, Samad runs into Dr. Marc-Pierre, and we are transported back to Eastern Europe, where Archie and Samad initially meet.

In their first encounter, Iqbal and Jones step out of the tank to patrol a Bulgarian settlement, completely unaware that the war has ended. Russian soldiers kidnapped Dr Marc-Pierre, a French scientist-turned-eugenicist who conspired with the Nazis during World War II. Samad asks to Archie: "Do you know who this man is, Jones?... The Russians told me. He's a scientist... choosing who shall be born and who shall not" (Smith, 2000, p. 100). Samad describes the doctor as breeding people like animals, only to exterminate them if they were not to the desired standard (Smith, 2000, p. 100).

For Samad, Dr Marc-Pierre wishes to have power over the future. He wants to craft a legion of men who could be indestructible, yet this cannot be carried out in a lab (Smith, 2000, p. 119). A Muslim, Samad rejects the belief that a man can influence people's destiny since "Only Allah saves!" (Smith, 2000, p. 119.) We see his hypocrisy in sending his son, Magid, to Bangladesh, despite his declaration that Allah alone determines what occurs in the future. This viewpoint is directly related with the Islamic belief that everything occurs for a reason, and there is no such thing as chance as is stated Holy Quran, in Surah Al-Nur, "Allah has created every animal from water, of them are some creeping on their bellies, some walk on two legs, and some on four. Allah creates what He wills, for sure Allah has power over all things" (Chapter 24:45).

Because the Nazis believe that those with undesirable physical and mental traits did not deserve to live, they use the policy of "euthanasia" (Smith, 2000, p. 102). Pursuing genetic purity to build a better human race that can exert dominion over the weak and disadvantaged is contrary to Samad's religious beliefs since it benefits the dominant genes. Some men, like Dr Marc-Pierre, "worship science of the body, but not the one who has given it to us" (Smith, 2000, p. 100). Samad rejects The Future

Mouse Project because, from his point of view, it is impossible for a man to determine a person's fate, which is also what Islam opposes, which Samad believes. Samad is proud of his culture and history and does not accept any external attempt to change it. He insists on preserving his history and culture despite the contradictions he lives with himself through drinking wine, which Islam forbids.

Therefore, Samad accuses Archie of not standing up for anything since Archie had "never slain a guy" before (Smith, 2000, p. 120). Despite Archie's confusion, Samad argues that "the whole issue is that we need blood on our hands. You see?? As a kind of restitution. What is wrong with you, Jones?" (Smith, 2000, p. 191). Samad's desire to have Dr Marc-Pierre's blood on his hand emphasises the theme of blood atonement. The loss of blood repays the other sins and bloodshed. Because Dr Marc-Pierre's study is expected to result in the deaths of tens of thousands of 'random' individuals, Samad urgently needs blood to honour those who were killed - the victims themselves. A tremendous evil has been unleashed, and it is now too late for Samad to do anything about it. As a result of war and eugenics, we have "this chance" "to atone for the bloodshed" (Smith, 2000, p. 9).

Spilling blood is also a means for Samad to be recognised. After slicing his thumb due to a thoughtless mishap at the restaurant where he worked as a server, Samad leaves the restaurant and wanders bleeding through the theatre district (Smith, 2000, p. 505). Reaching a plaza, he sits down on a seat and began writing IQBAL over successive chair legs "with his trickling blood" (Smith, 2000, p. 505). He wants to "scribe his name on the globe" (Smith, 2000, p. 505) and have an indelible mark on history. He does not want to be like the doctor, and he does not want to rename himself – nor does he think the doctor is like his great-grandfather. His preoccupation with the past influenced his outlook on the future, and he wished to leave a bloody trail as a testament to his character. He aspires to give his children a heroic tale about himself, like his heroic great-grandfather's tales of protecting his nation and people. He questions Archie on what he would tell his children if asked to define himself (Smith, 2000, p. 121). Archibald was unable to make up his mind: "Archibald. Make up your mind. Attempt to make a choice for the first time in your little existence" (Smith, 2000, p. 457). When Archie asks him what makes him so wonderful, Samad cries out that he is "a Muslim and a Man and a Son and a Believer" (Smith, 2000, p. 121). Just like

Archie, he must decide what he wants to do. Archie did what he was told when the going became tough, even assassinating the doctor (Smith, 2000, p. 121). In order to protect his values such as “democracy, Sunday meals, the promenade, the pier, and bangers and mash,” Samad seizes the doctor and leads him into a forest where “some five minutes later he heard a gun ring out” (Smith, 2000, p. 121).

Dr. Marc-Pierre’s death is not explicitly acknowledged, although he assumes he was killed by the gunshot he heard. At the meeting, we learn that Archie did not kill the doctor. When Archie pulled the gun and exclaimed, “I have a coin,” he adds, “And now I am going to toss this coin. I am going to throw it.” My life is at stake for heads or tails, and if it’s tails, I’m not going to” (Smith, 2000, p. 540). When he bends down to pick up his flung coin, the gunshot rings out, and the agony in his right thigh is excruciating. The uncertainty and coincidental character of history and historical truth are highlighted.

Samad’s long-held notion has been proven false: the reality has dawned on him that he has been lied to for half a century by the only person he could call a friend. The realisation that the basis of their relationship is founded on something as soft as marshmallows shatters Samad’s idea that there is a definite history and account of it. He can no longer take refuge in the stories of Mangal Pande or the tragedies of WWII. Only when Samad learns that the truth is a fiction susceptible to argument, or a falsehood, he begins to doubt his own foundations. As he puts it, “... and you begin to give up on belonging. In the blink of an eye, I’ve come to think that birthplaces are nothing more than ‘long, nasty lies,’ and I have come to accept the idea that “everything is an accident” (Smith, 2000, p. 407). To embrace his hybridity, he accepts the fluidity of historical truths and the complexity of cultural foundations. This is comparable to Samad’s emancipation, where he is able to exist in a neutral area: “it leaps off and disappears through an air vent” Archie observes after seeing the mouse. He has a positive outlook for the future: “Go on my son!” (Smith, 2000, p. 541). There must be a place where dualities and binaries may be reconciled in the present because Smith suggests a future liberated from the roots of the past’s rottenness.

In conclusion, getting rid of the idea of transforming from an expatriate person, who sees himself as oppressed, to a person, who can live in a mixed environment, is

necessary, especially for people aiming to live in a different culture. It is also essential to reach a fundamental point that one can cross despite the symbols and beliefs often recognized as red points that no one can cross.

2.4. Double Bind and Interaction in Diaspora

A second-generation immigrant, Irie Jones is uniquely positioned to bring a new vision for the future in the novel. Since she is a second-generation immigrant, she cannot fit neatly into any of the pre-existing categories of culture or identity. Because of her Jamaican and English ancestry, Irie has “created something new and unrecognisable, a new space for negotiating the meaning and expression of one’s identity” (Darder, 1995, p. 13). As hybrids, “they have no recognised nation and have yet to identify their position in the world” (Kuortti & Nyman, 2007, p. 245). Second-generation immigrants with diverse cultural origins in London must comprehend the futility of their desire to be a part of a single, united culture so that they can recognise their position.

Clara’s mother, Hortense Bowden, is also of mixed ancestry. The narrator explains that the family history requires unpacking like matryoshka dolls with the women of the family nestled inside each other (Smith, 2000, p. 356). Ambrosia Bowden has been raped and impregnated by Captain Charlie Dunham, an Englishman, as told in the “Root Canals of Hortense Bowden” chapter. An Englishman suddenly deciding that one needs an education makes Hortense “mute witness” to what occurs (Smith, 2000, p. 158). This further complicates the family’s history since their fathers are English conquerors who have committed acts of violence against the female body, a symbol of the oppressed nations they come from. Because of her multiracial heritage and colonial upbringing, Hortense believes that cultural conflict can be handled by tolerance, mutual respect, and a willingness to celebrate one another’s diversity.

The chapter ‘Mutiny’ refers to the Berlin Wall being down on November 10, 1989, as a turning moment in the history of cultural conflict. It has to do with the past. “It was a significant moment in time” (Smith, 2000, p. 106). “This is remarkable to me, as a witness to history in the making,” Irie Jones reflects. “Each and every one of them is unrestricted. After all, don’t you think that’s incredible this time around? That after years of living in the shadow of Eastern communism, they are finally rising as a

unified Western democracy” (Smith, 2000, p. 107). She hopes that the fall of the wall and the influx of newcomers will lead to enlightenment. Her dreams seem naive in light of the current issues, the challenges East Germans have had in trying to adjust to a new environment, their antipathy toward other immigrants, and the rising racism in West Germany and the West in general. When Archie hears her, he says, “I am not so convinced that that is such a wonderful thing. After all, you have to remember that Samad and I were in attendance. Because of this, the company had to break apart”, commenting that the youth forget why things are the way they are and why such things are important (Smith, 2000, p. 107).

Their response demonstrates the importance of origins in establishing security. Archie and Samad attempt to argue the need for separation and categorisation since change and progress are seen as conflicts. Their faith in historical discourse is shown in their insistence on having served in the war and knowing the “true” purpose for the erection of the wall. Irie sighs as she explains that her concern is the present. She also points out that Samad was not even there when the wall was built in 1961, having left with his father sixteen years earlier (Smith, 2000, p. 128). As an immigrant himself, Samad criticises the dismantling of the wall, calling it “foolishness... huge immigration to follow” (Smith, 2000, p. 107). In his mind, he is more established than newcomers, which reduces his willingness to engage in conversation with them.

She has “one foot in the present and one foot in the past” as an immigrant of the second generation (Smith, 2000, p. 80). The fact that she can’t shed her Jamaican heritage and hence can’t claim to be British gives her cultural discomfort. She has a strong desire to alter her physical appearance to cope with her inability to adapt and fit in. She aspires to have “straight hair. Hair that may be tossed and shaken as well as flicked and shaken as well as touched and brushed as well as blown away by the wind” (Smith, 2000, p. 273). Because of her Jamaican heritage, her naturally curly hair makes it a challenge for her to connect with any cultures.

Irie cannot see herself reflected in society. In English society, she is invisible and believes that adaptation to white mainstream culture will render her visible. In one of her lessons, her teacher Mrs Moody asks the class’s opinion on the Shakespearean sonnet 127 as follows:

Have you anything to say about the sonnets?

Yes.

What?

Is she black?

Is who black?

The dark lady (Smith, 2000, p. 120).

The woman in the sonnet is identified as black by Irie. Even though her instructor has told her not to do so:

No, dear, she's dark. She's not black in the modern sense.

(Smith, 2000, p. 120)

Mrs Moody is adamantly opposed to the notion that Shakespeare wrote a sonnet specifically for a black lady. She finds it unlikely that the same poet would write for a lord and then an enslaved person because, as she sees it, any black woman in 1600 England must have been enslaved (Smith, 2000, p. 120). If he was writing a sonnet for a white woman, "Elizabethans were highly fond of pale skin," he most likely wrote it for someone with a somewhat darker complexion (Smith, 2000, p. 226). This triggers Irie's desire to learn more about her origins. Irie's face "reddened" in reaction to her teacher's remark, and it quickly dissipated when she believed she had seen a reflection (Smith, 2000, p. 272). Rather than attempting to fit into British culture, her identity takes a new turn.

When the "push toward societal conformity is so strong, it might be only with the greatest experience of inner conflict or resistance" that we can begin to break away from it, Helene Lorenz emphasises in her paper "The Presence of Absence: Mapping Postcolonial Spaces" (Lorenz, 2004, p. 229). A new beginning for Irie occurs when she enters her mother's room and discovers that Clara is missing her front teeth. Her front teeth were knocked off in a scooter accident in 1974. Her parents' hypocrisy and untruths are nothing new to her; this is just another example of how the Bowdens and Joneses keep secrets, tales you didn't hear about, and a past you never fully unearthed, she thought (Smith, 200, p. 379). Samad Iqbal's discovery regarding the death of Dr Marc-Pierre is eerily similar to hers. The uncertainties in family background and estrangement from British society lead both of them to hunt for neglected origins in their past. This moment of truth liberates them. But Irie must retrace her steps and find her long-lost origins to come to terms with her hybrid identity without favouring one part of herself over the other.

However, from the beginning, she is searching for her lost cultural heritage to build a secure identity. When she returns to her grandmother's home, "that place was an adventure... She raced back there." For so long, they had been hidden from view in cabinets, neglected drawers, and filthy frames" (Smith, 2000, p. 399). Having a place to belong appears to bring stability and alleviate the worry of being in between, so Irie wishes to reveal these secrets. However, the colonial encounter in Jamaica has caused the past to be shaken by a multitude of values and cultures. Smith refers to historical facts as "X" because they are unreliable. It is revealed that "Irie marked everything she discovered (birth certificates, maps, military reports, news stories)" It is unclear where she came from or how she came to be in the first place (Smith, 2000, p. 331).

After meeting the Chalfens,¹ Irie's perspective is shifted significantly. This is reflected in her school environment, as well. Glenard Oak School headmaster Sir Edmund Flecker Glenard discovers her "in the very act of marijuana usage" (Smith, 2000, p. 38) during the beginning of their relationship. Glenard's influence on Irie Jones is, according to a statement from the Jamaican government, evident, although she herself could not, (Smith, 2000, p. 307). Sir Glenard is a friend of Captain Durham who has adopted Ambrosia, Irie's great-grandmother. At one point, Durham confided in his friend Sir Edmund Flecker Glenard that he wished for "the continuous education of Ambrosia," which is mirrored in the story's chapter "The Miseducation of Irie Jones" (Smith, 2000, p. 358). The school's headmaster feels "this entire experience is going to be incredibly educational" and orders her to see the Chalfens three times a week (Smith, 2000, p. 256). As Irie's history influences her present, her educational encounter "might be a type of guinea-pig experiment" (Smith, 2000, p. 256).

Irie experiences a thrill of encountering a certain England as she crosses the threshold of the Chalfen mansion (Smith, 2000, p. 328). As a typical British family, the Chalfens are distinctive because they seem "untrampled, unobstructed by history,

¹ The Chalfens are a middle-class family with a scientific approach to life. In *White Teeth* "they referred to themselves as nouns, verbs, and occasionally adjectives. It's the Chalfen way, And then he came out with a real Chalfenism" (Smith, 2000, p. 314). Their control of language and stability excites Irie, seemingly offering the possibility of self-fulfillment.

unfettered” (Smith, 2000, p. 319). Their ancestry indicates a lack of ambiguity, cultural diversity, and a strong feeling of belonging. The Jones/Bowdens and Chalfens are not alike. Firstly, the Chalfens has a reasonable number of children with clear parentage. The marriages are enduring and monogamous. Dates of life events such as birth and death are clear. Moreover, the Chalfens know their history and position in the 17th Century (Smith, 2000, p. 337).

When compared, Irie’s origins are “rumour, folktale, and myth” since her father “could offer no lengthier record of his family than his random arrival on the globe” (Smith, 2000, p. 338). Her ambition to be a member of the Chalfen family directly results from this: “She craves their Englishness” and the pristine nature of it (Smith, 2000, p. 328). However, their cultural purity is only at the surface. As third-generation immigrants from Germany and Poland, the Chalfens, née Chalfenovsky, had not yet been detected (Smith, 2000, p. 328).

A culturally mixed family, the Chalfens seem eager to assimilate into English society. Irie must understand that the idea of a single, authentic culture is only an illusion. Bhikhu Parekh states, “Any culture evolves, and it has no coordinating authority” (Parekh, 2002, p.143). As a result, Irie accepts ambiguity as a way of life since she understands that she cannot be a part of just one tradition. She finds pictures of Ambrosia, her great-grandmother, and a photograph of Charlie “Whitey” Durham against a backdrop to the sea while investigating Hortense’s home for her ancestors (Smith, 2000, p. 330). Irie learns to embrace her dual heritage as she discovers her English and Jamaican ancestry. In the hopes that “he might inform someone or anything about something,” she sleeps with a picture of her great-grandfather beneath her pillow.

Being a hybrid of a British and a Jamaican makes her a complete hybrid. She crosses the third space by challenging binary thinking with the strength of her mixed background. She can create her personality in this environment by incorporating elements from both cultures. As Dominic Head implies, the post-migrant identity is essentially volatile, being a site in which multiculturalism must be enacted (Head, 2003, p.108). In this way, Irie develops a postcolonial identity by studying the history of colonialism, her parents’ biographies, and lives of other immigrants in cosmopolitan

London. In *Transculturation and Biculturalism* (2005), Esther Alvarez Lopez says that “...a meaningful identity is established only through interaction with people and with other cultures” (Pultar, 2005, p. 91). Irie is still a part of the process of being, and thus her identity is still evolving.

Irie Jones has a double date with Magid and Millat Iqbal. Because “whatever brother it was, it was the other one too,” and she becomes a mother of a boy from an unknown father (Smith, 2000, p. 515). This adds a new layer of ambiguity to his roots. In the boy’s genealogy, there is a sense of fondness for hybridity. Because we discover that Irie’s child cannot be discussed with certainty and that his father will remain a secret. This clearly shows that Irie hopes for a not-too-distant future where origins are unimportant as it is painful to keep hold of deep roots (Smith, 2000, p. 527). In this way, Irie embodies Jamaican and Bangladeshi roots in her child’s bearing without a father. The nameless infant offers fresh beginnings and the coexistence of civilisations, in return. There are no cultural constraints for her so that she may usher in a vision of harmonious coexistence of civilisations in the future.

In conclusion, it is necessary for immigrants to study the history of the two cultures, a study based on fairness and transparency in reading the ordinary events, and to reach a position that enables the person to coexist in this new environment, as in the case of Irie, who fought a fierce battle to determine her identity until she was finally able to obtain what she wanted. Irie also embodies Jamaican and Bangladeshi roots in bearing a child without a father. The nameless infant offers fresh beginnings and the coexistence of civilisations in return. There are no cultural constraints for her so that she may usher in a vision of harmonious coexistence of civilisations in the future.

3. HYBRIDITY AND DIASPORA IN *BRICK LANE*

This chapter discusses the novel *Brick Lane* by Monica Ali, which covers identity, immigration, race, diaspora, cultural hybridisation, and belonging. Thus, this chapter critically deals with identity, diaspora, nostalgia, and exile by examining the events and characters of this novel through the lens of contemporary postcolonial studies. Ali's novel revolves around Nazneen, a Muslim woman from Bangladesh who moves to the immigrant neighbourhood of Tower Hamlets in London's East End after marrying an older man named Chanu. Due to her family's arrangement of marriage, she has no power to object. While Nazneen is trying to get out of her husband's house to break the boredom she is living in, she gets to know new people living in the same neighbourhood as hers, including Karim and Mrs. Radia. However, the novel also discusses the lives of children of first-generation immigrants namely represented by Shahana, Bibi, Karim, Razia's children, and Mr. and Mrs Azad's daughters, who are raised and lived in the host countries.

This chapter will explain the novel *Brick Lane* with a focus on hybridity and how the characters deal with coexistence between cultures, each one different from the other. In this chapter, the analysis of the novel will be based on Homi Bhabha's views on discourses regarding interbreeding in postcolonial contexts. It is also necessary for this chapter to focus on drawing cultures hierarchically through their minute details to eliminate such ideas because the ambiguity of cultural borders is difficult to define and control. As Bhabha explains that hybridity emerges as a state that exceeds the colonial discourse from the West and blurs the line dividing the coloniser from the colonised, Bhabha's perspective can be used with reference to hybridity and diaspora in the case of *Brick Lane*.

Brick Lane explores the complexities of postcolonial immigrant identity in multicultural Tower Hamlets through the prism of family history, ancestry, and genealogy. The neighbourhood is home to many nationalities, religions and cultures due to the constant influx of immigrants and thus is enriched with cultural interactions reflecting diversity of communities residing there (Spence, 2005, P. 88). As a result, the coloniser's exclusionary discourse may be resolved into pluralism in *Brick Lane*, potentializing the formation of postcolonial immigrant identity in the narrative line of

the novel. Therefore, this chapter tries to reveal how these cultural interactions are echoed in the novel *Brick Lane* in the light of hybridity and diaspora.

3.1. The Clash of Hybridity and Female Identity in the Diaspora

The novel's heroine, Nazneen, is a Bangladeshi Muslim lady who marries an older British man and moves to the Tower Hamlets in the East End, an area laden with immigrants in today's London. Because her family has arranged the marriage, she has no ability to object, which is in line with the cultural norms of Bangladesh demanding Bangladeshi women to obey the patriarchal way of life under its impact area. Just as women in Bangladesh are often stereotyped as quiet, meek, and submissive (Mortada, 2010, p. 54), Nazneen is not also devoid of how her culture encourages submission and forbids any sense of agency in women. This is reflected into her tendency to accept whatever happens to her as a part of her belief in destiny. Accepting everything as God's will, she never calls out for help. "If God wanted us to ask questions, he would have made us men" her mother once said (Ali, 2007, p. 80).

Her upbringing taught her to defer to men, starting from her dad, making it difficult for her to frankly share her thoughts and emotions even with her dad. This incident also foreshadows her opinions in her marriage since she must obey to her husband in the marriage. She does not have any concerns from despite Chanu being a way older than her and looking "like a frog" (Ali, 2007, p. 17). She tries to live up to her family's standards. She presses gratitude that her father has selected a husband for her and wishes that she will be a dutiful wife just as her mom is to her father (Ali, 2007, p. 16). This demonstrates her obedient nature.

At the beginning of her time in the UK, she often recalls her previous life in Bangladesh. The memories that come to her mind demonstrates how her mind is still in Bangladesh and her past life, even if she is physically far from her home. Her lack of engagement with her host culture indicates the importance of her native heritage to her sense of self. Who she is now is based on where she comes from. As Stuart Hall says, "Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories" (1994, p. 225), clearly reflected in Nazneen's attitudes in the UK.

Nazneen must go through a time of transition in order to create a new identity that can bring together her experiences in Bangladesh and England. This is improbable

for Nazneen, a Bangladeshi immigrant now residing in Tower Hamlets, who has no access to means of communication with the outside world. However, as the story progresses, we realise the transformation is subtle and slow. She embarks on a quest for self-knowledge by moving to England. She is clearly in for a tough road, ultimately leading to self-awareness and the ability to write her own story. Her recollections of Dhaka are sometimes dull but properly put with the earliest impressions of her village as “Vivid; so strong she could smell it” (Ali, 2007, p. 217). Here, identity always involves recalling what came before, the past self, making it difficult to forget the originating culture (Bhabha, 1994, p. 64). In the narrative line, Nazneen’s developing sense of self incorporates features of her former and current selves.

The new environment might make it difficult for a Muslim immigrant lady to adapt to the culture for various reasons. Not only does she have to follow the norms set down for her, but she also pertains to constitute an example for the other women around her. This is clearly seen in the incident when Nazneen’s sister Hasina elopes with her boyfriend and endures a life as a disobedient woman under disgrace (Ali, 2007, p. 94). A look into Nazneen’s life reveals a conversation about how the societal rules she has always adhered to have become ingrained in her, making her transition process challenging. As it is her duty to sit patiently due to God’s will, she cannot flee or complain about all the restlessness because Chanu does not raise his hand to her (Ali, 2007, pp. 101-102). Hence, she tries to convince herself that nothing in her life is worth being sad over. However, a hidden part of her struggles to surface. She feels listless in her confined life, and a heavy feeling settles over her (Ali, 2007, p. 102).

This shift is difficult for her, and we witness how much she suffers as an immigrant and a woman under oppression. Also, as Cormack notes, she experiences the same issue all women immigrants do; she is considered an outsider in the host country while being viewed by men as a mere commodity (2006, p. 700). As a result, she faces challenges in her quest for self-discovery due to the effects of colonial discourse and the patriarchal culture to which she belongs. Her internal monologue clearly shows that she struggles to reconcile her cultural identity with her desire to give in to the “shapeless, nameless thing” (Ali, 2007, p. 102).

Nazneen goes through several significant events in the book that all contribute

to her becoming a hybrid. When she initially sees ice skating on TV, which serves as her window to the wider world, a change is sparked in her. Her abode is like a prison for Nazneen. She says that for the first part of her life, until she was 18, she has lived in Dhaka, where she was always surrounded by other people, but after she arrived in London, she was enclosed in a box, with sounds all around her, but out of reach (Ali, 2007, p. 24). The only way to communicate with the outside world is Chanu, who believes that her reason to exist on earth is to bear children, a direct representation of patriarchal culture in the narrative line. This is reflected on Chanu's daily talks with his friends when he refers to Nazneen as, "Hips are a bit narrow but wide enough, I think, to carry children" (Ali, 2007, p. 23).

The ice-skating display on TV gives her a chance to connect with something that suggests self-authority rather than passivity. Taken aback by the unexpected sight, she temporarily loses track of her mundane life and focuses on the performance. A man and woman in skimpy clothes hug each other as they glide across the surface to the audience's applause. Separating briefly, the couple rejoins and continues their dance. Nazneen finds every move to be full of purpose and meaning, "a declaration" of love and unity (Ali, 2007, p. 36.) apart from the male gaze in patriarchy. For Nazneen, these moves, which would seem normal to a Westerner, are highly unusual. As she is confined to "destrangement", "the skaters' movements and the crowd responses appear magical" (Cormack, 2006, p. 709). This distracts her monotony. The days become more bearable and there is nothing left but the possibility of watching ice-skating until that point (Ali, 2007, p. 41). After her first exposure to the sports, she becomes obsessed with ice skating on television. She finds a sense of self in watching, something pure and not an assortment of small stresses and longing. She finds the new sense of self glory (Ali, 2007, p. 41).

Nazneen, like the ice skater, wants to take charge of her life and live in harmony with nature with this "spiritual affinity" (Kılıç, 2009, p. 50). Ice skating, as Kılıç explains (Kılıç, 2009, p. 30), is a metaphor for an active existence that foreshadows the novel's climactic moment, in which Nazneen is fully transformed and has a bright future ahead of her. Being able to relate to a dynamic activity like ice skating may also indicate a willingness to try new things and adapt. This is in line with identity formation in postcolonial contexts as "diaspora identities are constantly producing and

reproducing themselves anew, through transformation and difference” (Hall, 1994, p. 235). Because ice skating inspires the ideas that culminate in her hybridisation at the novel’s finale, it plays a vital part in her metamorphosis.

On her first trip into the city, she subsequently becomes lost. This is also pivotal in her path to embracing her hybridisation. This interaction does not address Nazneen’s identity crisis but sets forth an epiphany moment in her life. Her path has yet to reach its conclusion. What Nazneen has done is significant and should be seen as another move in the direction of actualizing herself. Therefore, it is not to be disregarded. For someone as quiet and challenged as her, it took many nerves to sneak out of the house without Chanu’s knowledge, which might indicate that her sense of independence and is growing. For a woman who seldom leaves the house and does not understand English, her returning safely to her home is a significant but modest victory. Her thoughts are still on her sister back in Bangladesh, but she feels relieved after taking a step toward autonomy. As a non-white face in the crowd, she realises they pay no attention to her after she finds delight in the idea that she is invisible (Ali, 2007, p. 56). This discovery comes after her husband leaves with the monologue, “Do you know what I did today?” and then recounts her visits to a pub and a long walk around town before visiting a Bangladeshi restaurant to ask for directions. When she finishes her account of the day’s activities, she praises herself, “See what I can do!” (Ali, 2007, p. 62-3).

Sometimes, she amazes Chanu with her words, even if she cannot express them at that time. Chanu’s incessant eulogising of Bangladeshi culture is buttressed by the findings of a poll published in the press, which claims that people in Bangladesh are the happiest across the globe. Despite his attempts to persuade Nazneen that the study’s findings are solid, she seems to corroborate Chanu’s thoughts, so he is surprised when she does not this time. He raises his eyebrows at her lack of agreement, leaving his eyes open and exposed (Ali, 2007, p. 351). Nazneen is further irritated when Chanu shows little enthusiasm about returning to Dhaka to get Hasina. The words “her heart ... was ablaze, with mutiny” describe how she felt within (Ali, 2007, p. 63).

To demonstrate her displeasure, she sabotages his efforts to advance professionally by ignoring her household responsibilities and ceasing her prayers on

his behalf. Starting from socks that are returned to his drawer without being washed and matched up, her substantial uprisings aim at bringing the state down from within (Ali, 2007, p. 63). She has now outgrown her role as the submissive wife. Though her efforts do not immediately alter the status quo, she continues challenging Chanu's power in small but significant ways.

While Nazneen, the elder, accepts things as they are, Nazneen, the younger, is more involved in her child's upbringing. As Nazneen's mother, the elder one, puts it, "Whatever happens, I accept it". She does not take her new-born to hospital because she thinks anything that happens is acceptable, and that the fate is opposed to the new Nazneen. Because "my kid should not spend time resisting the hands of destiny" (Ali, 2007, p. 14). Nazneen does not approve of herself in life, so she takes Raqib to the hospital. When Nazneen realises a flaw in her understanding of religion, it seems clear that her quest for self-discovery continues. Despite praying dutifully, she has never fully connected with her prayers and pacified herself. In return, she happens to realise that this is not how one should pray and read holy books, and that it is not a proper way to go about life (Ali, 2007, pp. 130-131).

That the tattooed woman is the first person she has ever met from outside her group raises the possibility that this is why she has been singled out for such criticism. The only character in the book from the West is the tattooed woman sitting and drinking by the window all day. As Southmayd points out, Nazneen has a hard time getting around because of her apathy and Chanu's lack of regard in encouraging her to pursue a life outside. However, she wanted to be present in the world and visit with people such as the tattooed woman, whom she finds fascinating (2015, p. 92). She daydreams about feeding her samosas and bhajis and she is eager to engage with the locals and learn about their culture. Not only does the ice-skating metaphor at the novel's conclusion imply that she is free to go anywhere she wants to, but so does the realisation that no one can hold her back. She is an independent person now. Being able to leave the house and go to work daily bodes well for her social life as an entrepreneur, which should expand due to her newfound freedom.

Chanu, Nazneen's spouse, also portrays hybrid identity as a character. Though he looks and sounds Westernised and has a degree in English Literature, his intellect

is decidedly not. Education is the one thing that has allowed him to carve out a niche for himself. Nazneen has no desire to engage with the outside world because of her constant condemnation of the West. On the other hand, she is safe at home. Nazneen is not on the same level as Chanu, unfortunately. The fact that she is a woman with no other goals in life except to take care of her family makes her feel worthless. Chanu is unable to recognise her as a unique person. According to his description, she is satisfactory: “a blind uncle is better than no uncle” (Ali, 2007, p. 31).

He is not willing to allow his spouse to go anywhere alone. Chanu states that she could not and would not venture outside because it would make him “look like a fool” (Ali, 2007, p. 39), demonstrating that he cannot adopt the Western value system. He looks torn between his desire to assimilate into his new environment and his unwavering devotion to and pride in his culture. To make up for his lack of success in the English cultural context, Chanu dreams up a perfect vision of Bangladesh to make up for his failures in his host country (Cormack, 2006, p. 702). Like other immigrants, he hopes to establish a better life using his skills, but he cannot. Cormack describes Chanu as “an embattled figure” who is stuck between his perception of himself as an educated gentleman and the England he aspires to be a part of (Cormack, 2006, p. 703). Chanu is to reduce himself to being a money maker to preserve some sense of self. He refuses to accept the actuality of his present life, preferring the mythic Bangladesh he has crafted in his mind (Cormack, 2006, p. 703).

He vows to be a success, no matter what happens (Ali, 2007, p. 44) and plans to return to the motherland as a “Big Man” (Ali, 2007, p. 400), but none of these things ends up happening to him. He resolves to return home, but not as the “Big Man” he once was. Therefore, he is not leaving because of his connection to his “home” culture but because he does not belong to the host culture. He is becoming excluded from mainstream society due to his inability to assimilate into daily life in the UK. His dissatisfaction with living there is summed up by his struggle to keep ‘being a hybrid’ in his mind while aiming for the best future for his family. He feels the clash between his culture and that of the West while he tries to maintain his identity. He expresses concern that the youth do not know who they are, and that society’s racism alienates them (Ali, 2007, p. 88).

Chanu complains incessantly that he is not getting the promotion to which he is entitled. He claims his co-worker Wilkie is treated better despite being late to work and underqualified. He doubts Wilkie's knowledge of classic English authors like Chaucer, Dickens, and Hardy. He considers himself better than Wilkie because of his knowledge of the classics of English literature. His disappointment prompts him to attribute his failure to racism:

Wilkie is not exactly underclass. He has a job, so technically I would say no, he is not. But that is the mindset. This is what I am studying the subsection 'Race, Ethnicity, and Identity'. It is part of the sociology module. (Ali, 2007, p. 24-5)

He believes that when his degree is completed, he will be successful because no one will look down on a degree from England. Although he states Dhaka University is a world-leading university, he decided those around him are ignorant and do not recognise its quality (Ali, 2007, p. 24-5). To this day, he thinks he faces bias in his new job as a cab driver. A cautious and skilled driver, Chanu yet looked to be the victim of a coordinated effort by the authorities. When indicted for driving offences, he states that he is the victim of conspiracies on the part of the authorities as he "was a careful and able driver." It irks him that he could be fined for being both too fast and too slow on the roads (Ali, 2007, p. 318). They imagine him as a 'country bumpkin' who would cower before them. Thus, he returns home complaining that the trial was unfair. After becoming disillusioned with his job and understanding that a degree from Dhaka University does not confer on him the reverence he desires, he begins to pursue credentials. He sees this as a potential ticket to the professional success he craves. Chanu fails to realise that obtaining more English certifications will not fix the issue. He may be trying to assimilate, but he despises conformity. He has such rigid views and limits that he cannot budge from them. Regarding this kind of interaction, Bhabha states that "the stairway as liminal zone, in between the designations of identity, becomes the process of symbolic contact, the connective tissue that produces the distinction between higher and lower, black and white" (1994, p. 5). Chanu's inability to enter this liminal realm is shown by his relationships with his spouse, kids, and others in society (regardless of their ethnicity). He thinks highly of himself and looks down on his wife since she is a woman and lacks formal education. He sees other Bangladeshi immigrants as ignorant, making him feel superior to them.

He displays his supremacy in his collection of furniture. More furniture than

Nazneen has ever seen in one place fills his space. It would be possible to furnish an entire house with the items in this one room (Ali, 2007, p. 20). They have many more household goods than they possibly need, which makes them happy. Plates purely for decoration adorned the walls, held up by wires, some of which Chanu describes as being covered in 'gold leaf'. Amongst the plats, Chanu hung his certificates in frames. Furthermore, it could be said of their collection that "Nobody in Gouirpir had anything like it" (Ali, 2007, p. 21). By amassing these goods, he can establish his own space. He is aware that if he were based in Dhaka, he would be unable to get such products, which will bring respect for him in return.

In a later chapter, the protagonist is described as "lying on the couch in lungi and vest." He stops wearing his pyjamas, indicating his impending return home and would spend the day lying face down on the couch, unclothed, or pinned to the floor under his books (Ali, 2007, p. 184). Meaningfully, this image of Chanu represents his defeat. He has been unemployed for some time, and they have hit hard times financially. He has cut himself off from all ties to mainstream culture. Their destination, according to him, is Dhaka. He is displeased at Nazneen's friendship with Razia when he is informed that she can facilitate a job. Then he agrees with her offer while pointing out how he is better than other immigrants: "Some of these uneducated ones, they say that if the wife is working, it is only because the husband cannot feed them" (Ali, 2007, p. 184).

Conversely, because he is educated, she is lucky enough to be allowed to work (Ali, 2007, p. 184). Despite this, Chanu demonstrates that his identity is fixed and that he is paralysed, unable to evaluate his current position. While his son Raqib is in the hospital for ten days, Chanu experiences a single life-altering incident in the narrative. Nazneen observes Chanu's transformation and realises that while he has never helped her in the kitchen, he must have been self-sufficient in the years before she has arrived. She realises she is not bothered by his lack of assistance. Conversely, she feels guilty for thinking that he could not do such things and "for not crediting him with this surprising ability" (Ali, 2007, pp. 127-8).

When Nazneen becomes the leader, the traditional gender roles are reversed, and Chanu becomes Raqib's caregiver and chef. He says, "I wanted to return to my

family as a Big Man. Honestly, I did not understand how crucial this was until I was almost done. As long as my wife and girls are on my side, I can take on any guy in the world” (Ali, 2007, p. 477). Nazneen, on the other hand, chooses to direct her own life. Nazneen’s achievement causes a subtle shift in him.

Nevertheless, this is insufficient to make him a successful hybrid like Nazneen. In line with Bhabha’s idea of being “almost the same, but not quite,” he is not the same as his wife (Bhabha, 199, p. 122). Due to his status as a first-generation immigrant, Chanu resorts to mimicking to blend in with the natives of the host country. “Mimicry is like camouflage, not a harmonisation of repression of difference, but a form of resemblance” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 128). Chanu does not register a comparable impact as an immigrant so emotionally and culturally displaced because he is not a mimic man because “Chanu registers no comparable impact as an immigrant so displaced emotionally and culturally in contemporary London” (Poon, 2009, p. 430). His degree in English Literature and ongoing efforts to set himself apart from other immigrants are not enough to fulfil his hopes of being accepted and treated fairly in his new home nation. Despite his best efforts to adopt English mannerisms, he fails. It is frustrating that he cannot distinguish between British and Bangladeshi cultures. Isolating his wife from the community, he rejects making bonds with other immigrants because he considers himself superior to them. He becomes estranged from his co-workers, loses faith in the future, and suffers from a severe case of “Going Home Syndrome” after failing to achieve the promotion he had hoped for. As Tyson writes, “to be unhomed is to feel not at home even in your own home because you are not at home in yourself”. Here the crisis of identity turns the person into “a psychological refugee” (2006, p. 14). This is what is reflected in Chanu’s story in the novel’s plot line.

Hasina’s letters show that Chanu’s desired household is quite different from the one she lives in. Since Bhabha’s definition of hybridity necessitates maintaining harmony between one’s culture and the host culture, it is hard to see Chanu as a successful hybrid. Despite his apparent pride in his heritage, he does not treat his fellow Bangladeshis equally or as his equals. Although he appears to have embraced British culture thanks to his background in English language and literature, he is concerned that British values would influence his offspring and believes they should return to their own country. Because he is a contradictory character, Chanu cannot

forge a new identity for himself. However, as Poon puts it, his dual cultural knowledge does not centre him but instead splits him, creating more confusion than enlightenment (2009, p. 430).

For many reasons, Razia, Nazneen's best friend, is another first-generation hybrid in the story who Chanu labels as not being the "respectable type" (Ali, 2007, p. 83). Razia "cuts her hair like tramp," he says of her grooming habits, even if she calls it a trend (Ali, 2007, p. 83). In addition, he assumes that her spouse is a slob who cannot even sign his name. Chanu says her kid is "a vagabond, throwing stones and what have you" (Ali, 2007, p. 83). The primary reason he does not like Razia is that she stands for everything that Nazneen is not. Dressed in what she calls a "tracksuit," she has adopted Western fashions. She vows that a sari would be the last item of clothing she would ever choose to wear. After her husband passes away, she smokes while caring for her children. Razia fits into her host society quite differently from the usual picture of a Bangladeshi lady. She motivates Nazneen to develop her own sense of self by teaching her English and suggesting that they launch a company together. Nazneen is set up for success thanks to the role model Razia provides.

Razia must also concede to achieve her hybrid identity since entering the third space is a negotiated process. She rejects her femininity so that she can rid herself of weakness. Instead, she adopts a more masculine look which gives her an aura of nonchalance. Meanwhile, "she keeps purdah (Islamic segregation of the sexes) by transforming and then transporting herself from female to male camp, maintaining independence without undermining Islamic propriety" (Kılıç, 2009, pp. 48-9). In this manner, she can maintain her position within herself while moving more quickly in society.

Razia's openness to new experiences makes her as successful as Nazneen. She is a first-generation immigrant who not only finds creative solutions to the challenges she faces but also serves as an inspiration to her friend. She declares, "I do not need anyone. I live like the English" (Ali, 2007, p. 358). After the book, she shows that she is starting a company named Fusion Fashions.

The only other Bangladeshi character Chanu is interested in befriending is Dr Azad, a fellow first-generation immigrant. His sharing of Chanu's education level sets

him apart from other Bangladeshis. When Chanu tells Mr Azad, “We intellectuals must stick together” (Ali, 2007, p. 35), he is ready to imply that he is on the same path as him. Mr Azad refers to Western influence on children as a “disease that afflicts us” in a different conversation, in which Chanu says his family will return to Dhaka before the children get pampered by Western society (Ali, 2007, p. 32). He calls this ailment “Going Home Syndrome” (Ali, 2007, p. 32), which he defines as the universal desire of immigrants to return to their home countries once they have amassed sufficient financial resources. Mr. Azad says of his yearly resolution to return, “Every year I thought, ‘Maybe this year.’ And I would pay a visit, and maybe even make a land purchase... and resolve to move back for real this time. And yet, there was always some kind of complication. But I’d always tell myself, ‘Well, maybe not this year’” (Ali, 2007, p. 33). When it comes to the present, he continues, “And now, I don’t know. I just don’t know” (Ali, 2007, p. 33). His lack of autonomy is shown by the fact that his wife will not allow him to voice his opinions. Mrs. Azad is correct when she says that they did not achieve their present social standing without struggle. When the family arrived, they had to lodge in a single motel room and survive on rice and dal, which caused digestive discomfort. Through this struggle, Dr Azad could complete medical school (Ali, 2007, p.113).

Despite his efforts, which bring him a professional success, he is a failed hybrid since he cannot establish healthy relationships with his loved ones. According to Santesso (2013, p. 69), Mrs Azad is a propagandist for an “Orientalist perspective of Islam,” which is reflected in her depiction. She crudely adjusts her underwear in front of visitors, yells at her husband that people wish to see him and glares at her husband and guest as they talked and silences them by holding up a hand, drinking beer and proudly letting out a burp (Ali, 2007, p. 108). Whenever Mrs. Azad condemns the newcomers for failing to assimilate into English society, she laments for many women in the region that have to spend ten or twenty years for grinding spices while learning just two words of English in the process (Ali, 2007, p. 114). Nevertheless, she also condemns them for wearing burka, complaining that they walk around wholly covered as if they were in “little walking prisons.” Hence, she accuses Chanu of complicating the issues when he talks about alienation and assimilation. She outlines some facts for him: They live in the West, and their children will become more Western. Moreover,

it is not bad for them to become so (Ali, 2007, p. 113).

Mrs. Azad sees Nazneen not very different from the immigrant ladies who do not know much English and spend their days cooking in London. When it comes to women like Nazneen, who do not want to give up their faith in exchange for a new identity devoid of their previous personalities, Mrs Azad seems to fail to see that things are not that easy. Nazneen, like many Muslim immigrants, places a high value on her faith and has no intention of abandoning her Islamic practices. Her critique of immigrant women who keep dressing in burkas and not knowing English demonstrate that she feels estranged from her own culture. In light of this, she cannot be considered a hybrid as she has not been totally absorbed into the host culture. Here, “assimilation’ of minorities into organic and comprehensive perspectives is a thing of the past” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 251).

In conclusion, hybridization lies in an individual’s endeavours and attempts to adapt to the environment without looking at the obstacles that stand in front of him/her and always finding solutions through the optimistic view and the lack of consideration that he is racially distinguished or that he is waiting for someone to determine his identity or receiving the bounty of being from a place seen as important. S/he should get what s/he wishes just because s/he belongs to that place, as in the case of Chanu, who does not try to think of solutions or adapt to the environment and always thinks of returning home when he is in distress. Chanu also tries to see himself as better than the newcomers, only because he is educated, and he even sees himself as better than his colleagues at work. As for Nazneen, she proved herself through her successful steps with the help of Razia, although she was slow, she proved successful.

3.2. Resistant Way of Existence Through Hybrid Identity

Resistance against the postcolonial controversies in daily life is reflected in the novel through various means of existence. One of these means is maintaining a hybrid identity in the society. For example, Nazneen finds her hybridity and forms a resistant way of existence through her faith in Islam. She follows a devout lifestyle, including reading the Quran and praying five times daily while under purdah. So, it is not simple for her to accept that she is going through the motions. As with her ice-skating fantasies and self-destructive behaviour with Chanu, she has difficulty shaking the shame she

feels for abandoning her ethnic identity. She bargains with it, promising never to dream of ice, blades, and spangles again. She pledges all this so that she can be free of the shame of disregarding Chanu (Ali, 2007, p. 102). Despite these efforts, the emotion inside of her will not go away. She has finally decided to stop accepting her destiny passively and do something about it.

This is also true in light of her relationship with Karim, which poses serious challenges to her faith, as noted by Kılıç Nazneen's provoked by detachment" from her native background" (2009, p. 40). However, the novel tells us that Nazneen does not abandon her religion but rather the social sides of Islam. Her romance with Karim is a pivotal moment in her hybridisation process. He is a key figure in the development of Nazneen's newfound autonomy. He paves the way for her to discover who she is by connecting her to the world. Nazneen is not socially accepted till after their affair begins. Because Chanu is not concerned with her education, she has little exposure to the outside world. He will not even let her take an English class. When she suggests taking English classes, he responds with, "Where is the need anyway?" (Ali, 2007, p. 37). Unlike Chanu, Karim tells her how she uplifts him and fills her in on the goings-on in the world, and he brings her stories of her more expansive community. Through their talks and research, she is motivated: "she became more familiar with her Muslim kin. She found out how many they were, how far dispersed they were, and how severely they were abused. For the first time, she learned about Bosnia" (Ali, 2007, p. 243).

In contrast to Chanu, Karim respects her as a unique person and takes the time to hear her out: "This was something he did: made her feel as if she had said a weighty piece as if she had stated a new truth" she claimed. (Ali, 2007, p. 262). Karim's intelligence piques her interest, and so does the way he carries himself, shown in his posture (his legs are spread apart, and his arms are folded, suggesting that he is confident in himself) (Ali, 2007, p. 210). Nazneen feels remorse throughout their affair but continues to take a fatalistic view of the situation. As soon as she discovers that Karim adores her because she represents the perfect Bangladeshi woman that will cover herself with a Barkha or scarf, she realises that this is not who she is because of the negative connotations of this stereotype but it is her rejection that holds her down. In the novel, this is turned into a "major discursive strategy, is a form of knowledge

and identification” that vacillates between what is always ‘in place’, already known, and something that must be anxiously repeated” (Bhabha, 1994, pp. 94-5). Thus, she clearly rejects the rigid, predetermined identities to which she has been subjected.

By quitting her relationship with Chanu, she takes control of her life, not letting chance to anybody to determine her future. As Kılıç notes, Nazneen has been blindly socialised to follow fate through her Muslim upbringing. Self-determination is a Western notion, but a position she reaches by the novel's close (Kılıç, 2009, p. 40). It is a radical shift from her former self, who was moulded by her culture and upbringing and who was taught to accept whatever life threw at her and to allow other people to make all the critical choices for her. If we look at Nazneen’s own words, we may draw some parallels with her predicament: “What could not be changed must be borne. And since nothing could be changed, everything had to be borne. This principle ruled her life” (Ali, 2007, p. 16).

On her path to finding her true self, Nazneen finds herself in situations where she musters the willpower to make choices rather than wait for someone else to do it. In one such instance, she has to decide between Chanu and Karim when Chanu decides that it is time for them to return to Dhaka. In her opinion, Chanu may have a change of heart when she chooses to accompany her family and she is unsure if Karim will attempt to prevent her. She eventually rejects both Chanu’s decision to take her back to Dhaka, explaining, “From the very beginning to the very end, we did not see things. What we did – we made each other up” (Ali, 2007, p.455).

Nazneen’s opting to stay in London is a central plot point since it marks the beginning of her change. Her relationship with Karim develops, and her business partnership with Razia is forged. All these things are crucial in shaping her into the person she is today. “This is England...,” Razia states at the end of the book. “You can do whatever you like” (Ali, 2007, p. 492). Nazneen’s choosing to skate in a sari rather than in Lycra is not an impediment; instead, it signals that she need not give up anything to achieve her third space. The fact that she can skate freely while wearing a sari is a metaphor for her freedom of movement emphasised in the novel’s conclusion.

Poon proposes:

Whether this is a statement of intent or wishful thinking, what seems significant ... is that the novel ends on a note of mobility ... Instead of stasis and closure, then, there is an allusion to

continued rhythms and journeys, a final gesture reiterating and valorising change that is rooted in the willingness to take small steps. (2009, p. 435)

Nazneen, in the end, creates a hybrid identity that combines elements of two cultures. Neither the host nor Bangladeshi culture claims this new identity, to borrow Bhabha's terms. Her new persona was not thrust upon her, and it may change at any time. It is the opposite of Bhabha's notion that everything is fixed in time and space. Unlike Chanu, Nazneen is not confined by stereotypes and does not "live out a tragedy" (Ali, 2007, p. 112). Generally speaking, she enjoys the independence she constantly craves.

Most commentators, like Yasmin Hussain and Alistair Cormack, think Nazneen's metamorphosis is a success; however, not everyone shares this opinion. Santesso argues that Nazneen's enduring resistance to becoming Westernised and her lack of interaction cannot be considered a wholly hybridised person (2013, p. 81). If we look at Nazneen's origin, it is hard not to see her as a successful hybrid. Nazneen's tale may be seen as one of migrant success. As proposed by Poon, her shift from a "naïve Bangladeshi bride" in a marriage of her father's arranging to a self-sufficient mother of two in Nazneen's story may be read as one of qualified immigrant success" (2009, p. 428).

Nazneen's attempts to resist what her Bangladeshi and British culture dictated to her through her hybrid identity created an identity that combines elements of two cultures that do not belong wholly to the host culture or the Bangladeshi culture yet form a new identity. She has proven that she can survive in this environment through her resistance to her husband and patriarchal control, which is considered rebellious in Bangladeshi culture. Nazneen broke all restrictions and liberated herself from those imposed on her. Her choice to stay in London is a central plot point, marking the beginning of her change. Furthermore, her relationship with Karim and her business partnership with Razia develop. These things are crucial in shaping her into the person she becomes.

3.3. Hybridity and Belonging to Diaspora in Second Generation

In the novel *Brick Lane*, second-generation hybrids include Shahana, Bibi, Karim, Razia's children, and Mr. and Mrs Azad's daughters. They are very different from their immigrant parents, who raised them in the host nation. Consistent with

Parker's hypothesis, children of the second generation are stuck between cultures, battling their parents and trying to negotiate between two different systems of being. While they might wish to integrate into British society, the old culture of their parents and the authoritarian approach to family values and discipline may restrict their ability to integrate (Tongur, 2013, p. 563).

So, the children work through issues with their parents and those brought on by being born into a host culture. Nazneen and Chanu's interactions with their children are illustrative of such generational tensions. Shahana's connection with her parents will be the basis since Bibi has always been a submissive daughter. Shahana has little appreciation for Bangladesh, despite her father's efforts to instil in her a love for the country's culture and traditions. Shahana becomes defiant when Chanu announces they are heading back to their home (presumably Dhaka), and she does all she can to avoid returning. She cannot write Bengali well, she objects to wearing kameez so much that she destroys them, and when it comes to food, she chooses the Western option every time. To quote Ali: "If she could choose between baked beans and dal, it was no contest" (2004, p. 18).

Since Bangladesh has never felt like a 'home' to her, Shahana has no desire to return there. She does not want to learn how the poet Tagore fathered the nation; she does not care to know anything about Bangladesh. Her rejection highlights the contrast between her imagined home and the country she grew up in. Attempting to instil a sense of pride in their Bengali heritage in his daughters, Chanu explains that in the sixteenth century, "Bengal was called the Paradise of Nations. Do they teach these things in the schools here? Does Shahana know about the Paradise of Nations? All she knows about is flood and famine" (Ali, 2007, p. 185). While Chanu believes knowing history instils pride in people, and he tries his hardest to make Shahana conform to Bengali culture, she ultimately adopts the values of the majority society to which she is exposed. Hiddleston suggests that her friction with her parents, who are first-generation immigrants, exemplifies the "frustration and confusion of a certain generation, stuck between cultures and fighting to define itself on its terms, according to its own choices and view" (2005, p. 61). Despite this, "Chanu forces his daughters to maintain a link with his native culture. Yet, this link seems meaningless to the girls, who are unable to relate to a place and a culture they have never known" (2009, p.

152).

Their parents, particularly Chanu, are the only people standing in the way of discovering who they are as individuals; they do not allow them to choose how to dress or what to read, listen to, or talk about. Chanu forbids his family from using English at home, but Shahana has a problem with that. “‘We are not allowed to speak English in this house,’ said Shahana, transgressing at top volume. There was always this tension between them. They could never get over their disappointments” (Ali, 2007, p. 193). Nazneen serves as a go-between for her sisters and their father because she is more patient and accepting of the girls than Chanu was, and she typically let them do as they pleased.

Shahana prefers shampoo to Fairy Liquid and wears moisturiser. She wants to have her ears pierced and a tattoo and to wear anything she wants. Because the first-generation characters are concerned that the host culture will negatively impact their children, they take measures to shield them from it. To ensure the safety of his girls, he strongly wants to take the girls back to Dhaka (Ali, 2007, p. 249). Shahana refuses to return despite Chanu’s best attempts to convince her otherwise. As a member of the second generation of a hybrid family, Shahana rebels against her parents to forge her own identity within the host culture. Upstone implies that Shahana’s “new identity is embodied in one statement” (Ali, 2007, p. 200) as “Shahana’s declaration at once emphasises her global culture, her British identity in language, and her commitment to the future” (2007, p. 338).

Shahana is a hybrid that embraces British values and traditions in her life. The first-generation hybrids, it may be claimed, are the ones that make it the most difficult for hybrid second-generation immigrants such as Shahana to discover their identities. Razia’s daughter Shefali’s relationship with her parents is fraught for the same reasons as Shahana’s. Shefali even attempts to leave home in a small outfit, while Razia finds it inappropriate and says to Nazneen that she cautioned her daughter, “I told her ‘No way’,” continuing ‘Daughters! They are trouble’” (Ali, 2007, p. 229). Shefali, like Shahana, struggles to find her voice, and she manages to go to college despite their financial struggles. She has fully assimilated into the host culture, as shown by the fact that she shares the British desire to take a gap year before beginning college.

Another second-generation hybrid portrayed in the novel is Razia's son Tariq. His engagement in narcotics and gangs represents a troubling aspect of adolescent Bengali culture. They are at odds with society, not just first-generation immigrants. The perspective of the former generation further complicates matters. A comment from one of them sums up the outlook of Razia's neighbours because the neighbours believe that any sane person would have them deported back to the motherland (Ali, 2007, p. 390). As Tongur states, since their families are concerned with the morality of the issue than seeking medical assistance for their youth, the community is unable to assist them, and the problem persists (Tongur, 2013, p. 564).

To learn more about Dr Azad's daughter, we must go with Nazneen and Chanu to his house. "Legs as strong as her mother's, although a few inches shorter in the skirt department" (Ali, 2007, p. 111). With this description, there is an implication that the daughter takes after her mother, but she does not appeal to dressing rules in her family. Her father is embarrassed by her behaviour: "The doctor tightened his grasp on his seat. His legs and feet were bunched up. The light formed a circle in his helmet hair. He was firmly rooted to his seat and would not budge. The only thing keeping him upright was that" (Ali, 2007, p. 112). Like her mother, she has become a part of the dominant culture, suggesting she is fully integrated into the British culture and does not seemingly have much connection with her home culture. Since this is the case, she cannot be considered a hybrid under Bhabha's terminology.

These issues are recurring in *Brick Lane*'s second-generation hybrids. The young Bangladeshis refuse to accept their existing circumstances and instead resist. Second-generation hybrids reject their parents' and grandparents' morals and ethics. In contrast to their parents' apathy, they actively seek opportunities to undermine established norms and values. As stated by Fernandez, *Brick Lane* Monica Ali depicts a "(multi)community-based organisation of society where both first- and second-generation characters, linked initially to a monolithic community, show dissimilar levels of integration in it" (2009, p. 145). However, not all protagonists are capable of this. The first-generation hybrids view the host culture with suspicion and cannot achieve true hybridity because of this. Almost all first-generation characters worry that their offspring will be negatively impacted by the host culture, as seen by their interactions with their offspring.

As a result, it is safe to say that Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* presents hybridity as something constructive, leading to diverse layers of society by challenging static identities, in line with the concepts of hybridity and diaspora. Emancipated from the norms of their culture, the characters seem to be free to forge identities that are as unique as they are fluid.



CONCLUSION

When Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* and Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* are analysed, it can be clearly seen that individual identities are subject to constant changes due to the layering of cultures in the modern society. Immigration is one of the most critical factors that can change culture due to the presence of varying cultural norms among settlers and new immigrants. This thesis aims to show how hybridity and diaspora, resulting from the movement of people from former colonies to the Western countries, change our perception regarding the notions of hybridisation, diaspora, and identity formation. In this manner, this study focuses on the problem of forming identity and diaspora in British society with examples from Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* and Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* in the light of postcolonial theory.

Smith and Ali present the crisis created by the multiple identities within society and how the concept of cultural difference can destroy the lives of innocent people by creating a conflict between the powerful and the weak. In *White Teeth*, Smith examines Samad Iqbal and his struggle to preserve his culture and heritage in the shadow of English culture that views his grandfather as a rebel who fought against the English occupation. Through Iqbal, Smith wants to convey how cultural conflict affects the individual's personality and causes them to live in constant conflict. On the other hand, Ali tries to explain the struggle of Nazneen, who lives in an arranged marriage in the shadow of society in whose language she knows only blessings and the word no, and her attempt to coexist despite the difficulties she is experiencing through her effort to go out for the first time to get to know the society and through her acquaintance with Karim. In the novels, Smith and Ali use their characters to simulate the lives of minor communities in the English society through dramatic ways of narrating events. As discussed previously, most of the characters live in conflict resulting from cultural differences; this is not only the feeling of the first generation, as the current situation also applies to the characters of the second generation who live in the diaspora with their inability to cross between two cultures. Through the characters' lives, the reader can imagine the conflict and the process of losing identity. To facilitate this, Smith and Ali apply the concept of internal conflict experienced by their characters in societies where they are minorities in cultures that differ from where they reside. In this way, hybridity is one of the most prominent focal points of colonial discourses. Although

the Western discourses seek to imbue Western and Eastern cultures, hybridity can reflect the culture of the original colonial countries that Western countries try to deny with the cultural values living side by side.

In the second chapter, the concepts of identification, immigration, ethnicity, diaspora, cultural hybridity, and belonging are explored in Zadie Smith's *White Teeth*. The analysis is based on the discussion of one of the influential postcolonial theorists, Homi Bhabha. Bhabha believes that the differences built by the occupiers led to a disjointed community, which caused fragility in the communities. Thus, all ethnic conflicts can be said to stem from the intervention of imperialist forces. In the novel *White Teeth*, Smith presents a postcolonial text, which shows the variations between the different ethnic groups in London. The novel is a way to bring recognition to those who live in conflict, with their unravelling path to determining their identities. *The White Teeth* allows the reader to gain an insight into the conditions in London at different times. The reader is exposed to the Second World War, moving to London, living with the conditions in the new society, and the behaviours practised, often opposed to Bangladeshi culture. The first chapter focuses on knowing the exact boundaries between the cultures often present in a hierarchical way. These must be challenged to avoid discrimination because the ambiguity of cultural borders makes them difficult to define, which is a fundamental idea Homi Bhabha sets down. Samad's attempts to fight himself through his marital treachery and to return with all his family back to Bangladesh are a good example for the controversies created by postcolonial discourse in the novel. The reader also follows the Boden family, represented by Clara Boden, from a migrant Jamaican family. While no members of the family are at the centre, their struggles provide insights into tensions about how they reproduce bilateral impurities. Similarly, the experiences of the Iqbal and Jones families shed light on ethnic and cultural tensions and the uselessness of trying to belong to a specific culture.

On the other hand, Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* deals with the issue of immigrants and their challenges in determining their identity in a different culture. Ali's novel is a revolution against the behaviours that subject people to the submission cycle. Her novel considers ways to liberate oneself from the restrictions of cultures, especially their negative aspects. By giving a voice to her heroine in the novel and enabling her to break some of the restrictions imposed on her, she enabled her to live far from the

conflict experienced by the rest of the expatriates. As a Bengali novelist, Ali tries to cover an important topic for people who live in different cultures: how to stand on the cultural boundaries drawn by colonial discourses and thwart such discourses because there are no borders for a culture. She believes that the restoration of the past is a crucial point for other generations to understand the history of their families following that period. Thus, in her novel, Nazneen is portrayed as a woman who fears the future and lives in poverty in a society characterised by discrimination and abuse. Through the concept of identity, hybridity and diaspora, Ali draws the basis for the main points of her novel. As the narration reveals at the end, Nazneen creates a blended identity that combines elements of two cultures. Unlike Chanu, Nazneen does not conform to stereotypes, nor does she “live a tragedy” (Ali, 2007, p. 112). The novel presents hybridity as a constructive thing, leading to a diverse society by challenging fixed identities, in line with Bhabha’s notions of hybridity as a proper entity. Nazneen and Razia are the only protagonists who fit well with his definition. Freed from the norms of their culture, they are free to form identities that are as unique as they are flexible.

In addition, the immigrants generally do not adjust to the norms of a community and feel part of that society. They are unable to achieve their self-determination. The first and second generations experience this kind of struggle throughout both novels. The first generation, shown by Samad in *White Teeth* and Chanu in *Brick Lane*, fail to assimilate into English society due to the stigma attached to them due to their colonial background or physical appearance. Thus, immigrants can have other tendencies, often hostile, stemming from the antagonism of the host culture. The immigrant who is not welcomed by society and is treated as the other will try to find his identity and evidence of his being. He may be adopted by some extremist groups who try to show him they can make him happy in finding his identity while keeping their ulterior motives and goals hidden. They can escape the void and the feeling of inferiority by joining such groups, which can dismantle society and create a more significant gap than previously existed. From this point of view, this can sow the spirit of division and antagonism among individuals who are quickly drawn into such groups.

In this way, racism is generally centred around colour, gender, language, and culture in postcolonial culture. These elements symbolize negativity/positivity, inferiority/superiority, and exclusion/integration in the host country. The former

colonizers saw themselves as part of the motherland and assumed they shared similar cultural values. This is why displaced expatriates tend to see the host country as a land of opportunities and want to stay there because they assume this country to be their home country. Undoubtedly, the idea of the motherland is ideal for them. However, the reality after reaching it has sharp consequences for immigrants, who expect to live in better conditions, find a well-paying job, obtain a higher education, and settle in a suitable place. Their perceptions of this country seem very different to reality, and they become frustrated about the “mother country” that they encounter. Upon entering the country, immigrants must prepare to be treated as members of a separate world of belonging based on their culture and ethnicity. Against their wish, they suddenly realize that they are seen as an Other rather than a part of the host country’s society and find themselves unwelcome.

Immigrants in the diaspora are preoccupied with loss, isolation, and rootlessness because they are divided between a painful past and a lost present, in which they communicate and separate. It is as if they are standing on the threshold. Therefore, the meaning of being at home becomes an inevitable question for the people of diaspora communities. Feelings of belonging, identity formation and loss of place lead them to uniquely uproot themselves from their homeland and create isolation from their motherland.

Through the definition, the idea of diaspora is a group of people who have settled in a new area yet still recognize that they are attracted to their homeland and culture. As is the case of Samad and Chanu, who could not abandon their customs and cultures and see their host country as completely different from their country and culture; they always feel that their culture is trying to attract them back as they think of returning and sometimes staying at home for long periods. The connection with the old country can be seen in the first and second generations born to immigrant families in the host country. Their family’s shared history influences the formation of the identity of the second generation, who are aware of their roots and can feel an inescapable connection to their country of origin even if they have never been there. Moreover, the members of second generation, represented by Irie Jones, Magid, and Millat, also face difficulties in determining their identity because it is closely linked with its roots through family. However, rather than seeing the position of immigrant

nationals as the emergence of new possibilities and building a multicultural society in which diversity is celebrated, colonial nations may view them as people to discriminate against. As expatriates live in a fictional homeland far from their original country, they face many problems regarding their languages, cultures, and ethnicities.

In conclusion, it is necessary to deal with such issues that concern immigrants and to work to remove all borders between cultures because there are no borders to any culture, as there is never one culture that prevails over the other or is better than the other. Both authors try to show that such issues create significant impacts if not dealt with appropriately, as they can be destructive to society or by themselves, a cohesive community must be created away from conflicts. As seen in these works, civil strife must be eradicated by changing policies that lead to the development of such issues. Finally, immigrants must find ways to live in an environment different from theirs and coexist with the residents. Through these actions, it is possible to create a coherent society which strives hard to develop itself and those around it and bears responsibility for the conflicts it creates. The novels *White Teeth* and *Brick Lane* are clear examples of such imaginary initiatives to be taken in societies where individuals tend to form hybrid identities in promising diasporas through their will to engage and change prevail.

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