

**T.C.
ISTANBUL AYDIN UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES**



**DECENTRING HOMOGENEITY: TRANSMITTING CULTURAL
HETEROGENEITY TO GENERATIONS IN ANDREA LEVY'S
SMALL ISLAND AND ZADIE SMITH'S *WHITE TEETH***

MASTER'S THESIS

Atakan SUMER

**Department of English Language and Literature
English Language and Literature Program**

JANUARY, 2024

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Thesis Advisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Gamze SABANCI UZUN

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APPROVAL PAGE

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that all information in this thesis document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results, which are not original to this thesis. (31/01/2024)

Atakan SUMER

FOREWORD

It is a great honour to pen this foreword for my esteemed supervisor, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Gamze SABANCI UZUN, who has been a constant source of inspiration throughout my studies at İstanbul Aydın University. Her immense knowledge coupled with her passion for our department fueled my desire to accomplish the Master's degree program. I would like to express my endless heartfelt thanks and gratitude to her for her patience, motivation, suggestions, and contributions in all the time of writing of this thesis.

I also wish to express my appreciation for the lecturers at İstanbul Aydın University. Each of you has contributed to the mosaic of my academic career.

I would like to thank my parents whose love and guidance are with me in whatever I pursue. Their unwavering belief in me has been the sign of this success.

January, 2024.

Atakan SUMER

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ABSTRACT

This thesis will explore the concept of cultural transfer in the first-generation and the second-generation of post-war identities in the novels of two British Caribbean women writers: Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* (2000) and Andrea Levy's *Small Island* (2004). In this thesis, I will argue that the emergence of heterogeneous cultures through multicultural relations challenges homogeneous cultures and identities. More specifically, this thesis examines the deconstruction of monolithic cultures within the arrival of first-generation immigrants and the defeat of hierarchy in cultures and ethnicities through the complex relations of the second generation.

This thesis will demonstrate that hybridity is a powerful form that not only challenges homogeneous cultures and identities but also blossoms a multicultural future in London. In this respect, Smith's *White Teeth* and Levy's *Small Island* conclude with a mixed-race baby as a resolution of racial and cultural tensions and the mirror of a multicultural London in the future. While *Small Island* portrays hybridity with the birth of Queenie's mixed-race baby, Michael, *White Teeth* extends it further through the indeterminate genetics of Irie's baby as a rejection of the significance of racial and cultural roots forever. Even though stereotypical cultural and racial formats of the past are no more than a myth for the second generation, the first generation imposes the racial and cultural prejudices arising from cultural and racial stereotypes on the second generation. However, the birth of different cultural and ethnic origins in one body defeats racial ideology for a multicultural future in London. Thus, this thesis will conclude that first-generation immigrants are imprisoned by the racial ideology of the past, while the second-generation disrupts the universalization of stereotypes based on racial ideology imposed by the first generation, with the birth of the third generation.

Keywords: multiculturalism, hybridity, heterogeneous, homogeneous, cultural transfer, sense of belonging

HOMOJENLİĞİN MERKEZSİZLEŞTİRİLMESİ: ANDREA LEVY'NİN *KÜÇÜK ADA*'SINI VE ZADIE SMITH'İN *İNCİ GİBİ DİŞLER*'İNDE KÜLTÜREL HETEROJENLİĞİN NESİLLERE AKTARILMASI

ÖZET

Bu tez, iki İngiliz Karayipli kadın yazarın romanlarındaki birinci nesil ve ikinci nesil savaş sonrası kimliklerdeki kültürel aktarım kavramını inceleyecektir: Zadie Smith'in *İnci Gibi Dişler* (2000) ve Andrea Levy'nin *Küçük Ada* (2004). Bu tezde, çok kültürlü ilişkiler yoluyla heterojen kültürlerin ortaya çıkmasının, homojen kültürlerle ve kimliklere meydan okuduğunu savunacağım. Daha spesifik olarak, bu tez, birinci nesil göçmenler içindeki yekpare kültürlerin yapı-sökümünü ve ikinci nesil göçmenlerin karmaşık ilişkileri ile kültürlerde ve etnik kökenlerdeki hiyerarşinin yenilgisini incelemektedir.

Bu tez, melezliğin yalnızca homojen kültürlerle ve kimliklere meydan okumakla kalmayıp aynı zamanda Londra'da çok kültürlü bir geleceğin yeşermesini sağlayan güçlü bir biçim olduğu sonucuna varacaktır. Bu bakımdan Smith'in *İnci Gibi Dişler* ve Levy'nin *Küçük Ada* adlı eseri, ırksal gerilimlerin çözümü ve gelecekte çok kültürlü bir Londra'nın aynası olarak karma ırklı bir bebek ile son buluyor. *Küçük Ada*, Queenie'nin karma ırklı bebeği Michael'ın doğumuyla melezliği tasvir ederken, *İnci Gibi Dişler*, ırksal ve kültürel köklerin öneminin sonsuza kadar reddedilmesi olarak Irie'nin bebeğinin belirsiz genetiğiyle melezliği daha da genişletiyor. Geçmişin kalıplaşmış kültürel ve ırksal formatları ikinci nesil için bir efsaneden öte olmasa da, birinci nesil kültürel ve ırksal stereotiplerden kaynaklanan ırksal ve kültürel önyargıları ikinci nesle empoze etmektedir. Ancak farklı kültürel ve etnik kökenlerin bir bedende doğması, çok kültürlü Londra'nın geleceği açısından ırksal ideolojiyi yenilgiye uğrattırıyor. Böylece bu tez, birinci nesil göçmenlerin geçmişin ırksal ideolojisi tarafından hapsedildiği, ikinci neslin ise birinci nesil tarafından empoze edilen ırksal ideolojiye dayalı stereotiplerin

evrensellesmesini üçüncü neslin doğuşuyla bozduğu sonucuna varacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: çokkültürlülük, melezlik, heterojen, homojen, kültürel aktarım, aidiyet duygusu

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I. INTRODUCTION

Contemporary literature reflects cultural issues to uncover problems of identity and sense of belonging within the scope of historical, social, and cultural changes. As a result of British imperialism, the mass Commonwealth immigrants from the former colonies to the mother country, England is one of the cultural issues that led to drastic social and cultural changes regarding the formation of cultural identity in London. Commonwealth immigration is thus a true cultural exploration for the cultural and social construction of England. As London becomes the contact zone of diverse races and cultures, the merge of cultural and racial differences gives birth to heterogeneous cultures and identities in London. Therefore, it is inevitable that London hosts races with different cultures and unites them under one roof and flag, laying a new foundation for the cultural and social understandings and ideological basic structures of the society through the interaction of cultural differences. While the merge of differences through multiracial, multicultural, and multi-ethnic relations defeats the monolithic cultural understanding and the hierarchy of cultures and ethnicities, it also emerges a powerful hybrid form that peels homogenous notions. The emergence of hybrid identity through multicultural and multiracial relations not only deconstructs the traditional homogeneous notions that have been constructed such as culture and identity, but also reflects a glimpse of a multicultural future in London.

London, as the contact zone of cultural and racial differences in post-war England, gathers cultural differences to first clash and then transfer their differences to each other. This contact zone becomes an endless road where people constantly reframe their identities and cultures through cultural differences and circumstances experienced in their environment. However, the inability to achieve a sense of belonging on this endless road also entails identity problems since there is a specific bond between identity and the concept of a sense of belonging in a new place. As Zygmunt Bauman explains the bond between identity and a sense of belonging in a new place in his work, *Identity: Conversations with Benedetto Vecchi*:

the thought of 'having an identity' will not occur to people as long as 'belonging' remains their fate, a condition with no alternative. They will begin to entertain such a thought only in the form of a task to be performed, and to be performed over and over again rather than in a one-off fashion. (2004:11)

In this regard, the clash of cultural and racial differences in a new setting emphasizes the significance of the bond between identity and sense of belonging for immigrants. This can be applied to the members of the former colonies of England, who were illusioned by British education of the colonial era since they supposed the mother country was a dreamland where they could accomplish many of their dreams regardless of their cultural and racial differences. However, post-war London does not offer what they desire from the mother country and locks their dreams in chains. Hence, many writers whose background dates back to Caribbean immigrants have expressed their sacrifices and devotion for the sake of their mother country, England in their literary writings. The disappointment in the mother country that the immigrants encounter triggers a sense of (un)belonging which also could spark an identity crisis regarding their understanding of culture and race. It is a fact that the first group of Caribbean immigrants who voluntarily join the British army to serve in the RAF (Royal Air Force) prove their devotion to the sake of the mother country and contribute a sense of togetherness despite their cultural and racial differences. However, John McLeod reveals the conflicting circumstances of post-war London after the arrival of the Caribbean immigrants as "the city that demythologizes the colonial myth of London as the heart of a welcoming site of opportunity and fulfilment for those arriving from the colonies" (2004: 27). Confronting the reality behind the veil of illusions in the process of the clash of differences awakens feelings of otherness, disappointment, and disillusionment in the minds of immigrants. As Avtar Brah, in her work, *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities* reveals the sense of (un)belonging as "the question of home, therefore, is intrinsically linked with the way in which processes of inclusion or exclusion operate and are subjectively experienced under given circumstances" (1996: 189). This inclusion and exclusion operate remarks on the way Kim Evelyn reveals the conflicting circumstances of the first group of the Windrush immigrants: "a complex social reality: a country that needed them for labor yet found their presence problematic;

the great cosmopolitan acceptance of Britain was clashing with the racism that built its empire” (2013: 130). As the social and cultural reality in a new location plays a significant role in determining identity, the process of the clash of differences in the mother country concretizes the feeling of (un)belonging, which brings the immigrants to the stage of an identity crisis. On the other hand, Diaspora, as Bill Ashcroft defines: “the voluntary or forcible movement of peoples from their homelands into new regions” reflects the consciousness that is determined by alienation from the new location with a lack of feeling for the identification of home (2013: 61). Therefore, it also signals the complication of historical and cultural balance for individuals as it pushes them into a crisis of being in-between. Thus, the consequences of Caribbean migration in the process of the clash of differences give birth the feelings of (un)belonging, rootedness, dislocation, alienation, and cultural issues, which also trigger the question of post-war diasporic identity issues on British soil.

As previously mentioned, cultural and social interactions in a new location play a significant role in determining identity and belonging. Since the main focus of this thesis is the cultural transformation in a new space, it is appropriate first to explore the cultural identity formation and how this formation constantly maintains and develops itself based on the influence of circumstances and others. This process can be seen as complicated and endless as Stuart Hall in his work *Cultural Identities and Diaspora* defines identity formation as infinite because “it is a production of understanding and perception” and this endless formation can be changed over time with new ideas (1990: 51). The role of cultural and social interactions in a new space has an enormous trace on identity formation since the immigrants reshape their cultural identities under the influence of other cultures. Therefore, social and cultural aspects in a multicultural space frames the identity through the reciprocal social and cultural interactions. On the contribution of the connection between identity formation and social aspects, Charles Taylor in his work *Multiculturalism: and the Politics of Recognition* defines identity as the notion of recognition that we receive “through the course of our contact with significant others” to determine identity (1992: 36). This case can be seen in the contact zone, where various cultural and racial differences merge and construct cultural hybridity through their interactions with others.

Thus, multicultural interactions build hybridity within the combination of various cultures. Avtar Brah's transition of diaspora from the homing desire as "the imagery of traumas of separation and dislocation" to "the sites of hope and new beginnings" opens up a door where London hosts diverse cultural and racial identities (1996: 190). The emergence of hybridity as a result of multicultural interactions in London brings about transferring different cultures to each other. As Homi Bhabha argues that the diverse cultural and racial identities "challenge our sense of the historical identity of culture as a homogenizing, unifying force, authenticated by the originary Past, kept alive in the national tradition of the People" (1994: 37). The fluidity of homogeneous cultures after the intervention of hybridity takes the place of the traditional understanding of fixed cultural notions. Moreover, Anthony Easthope remarks Bhabha's account of hybridity: "What hybridity is defined against, what is not hybridic" (1998: 342). It is possible to understand that hybridity has the power to deconstruct homogeneous forms that are influential markers in the construction of identities in a new place such as race, and culture. Stuart Hall also describes, hybridity as "a powerful creative source" since it replaces the stereotypically rotten formats of the past by constructing new forms that are more proper to the present conditions (1992: 310). Hybridization not only changes the conventional forms that have lost their freshness but also becomes the vision of new fluid cultural forms. Stuart Hall defines cultural identity as a term considered "becoming" rather than "being" since cultural identity is linked to the future as it is to the past. (1992: 291). Hence, although cultural identity has usually been considered as belonging to the past, however, it can be shaped and changed according to the future and the circumstances of the environment.

British-Caribbean contemporary women writers: Zadie Smith and Andrea Levy tackle the historical event of the Caribbean migration to the mother country in their migrant writings to justify many immigrants' belonging to England. As Mike Phillip notes the significance of migrant writing:

Artists and writers of migrant origin, especially Afro-Caribbean, have responded to this historical platform with a new confidence and interest in exploring both their roots and the circumstances of the time. The result is a growing conversation about the effects of Caribbean migration on British identity. (2004: 1)

Smith and Levy's migration background and being born as mixed race in England give them a unique opportunity to successfully present the conflicts depending on the identity, culture, and race in constructing of heterogeneous cultures in multicultural London. In this regard, Levy and Smith's responses to this historical platform have been pushing the boundaries of homogeneity of cultures since the emergence of hybridization through the mixed-race babies in both *Small Island* and *White Teeth* symbolize a spark for diverse cultural and racial beginnings of the next generation in multicultural London. Thus, Levy and Smith expose the cultural transformation of characters in London by effectively re-raising postcolonial issues to resolve the racial and cultural tensions of the past and build an optimistic space for the future of heterogeneous cultures and identities.

Andrea Levy examines the concept of multiculturalism and hybridity in her literary works. Levy, as being British-born with Caribbean descents remarks on being English without coming from white ancestors in her essay, "*This is my England*":

I am English. Born and bred, as the saying goes. (As far as I can remember, it is born and bred and not born-and-bred-with-a-very-long-line-of-white-ancestors-directly-descended-from-Anglo-Saxons.) England is the only society that I truly know and sometimes understand. I don't look as the English did in the England of the 1930s or before, but being English is my birthright. England is my home. An eccentric place where sometimes I love being English. (Levy, 2000)

As she experiences being English without sharing a monolithic cultural and racial root, she is able to shed light on the representation of hybrid identity, culture, and the issues of belonging in her literary works. Therefore, her literary works not only give place for the conflict of cultural and racial differences in post-war England but also unfold the justification of many immigrants' sense of belonging to England. By doing so, she blows out the obstacles in front of cultural and racial integration and releases the formation of heterogeneous cultures and identities where differences can be united rather than alienated. In the first chapter, the historical encounter of cultural and racial differences will be explored within the significance of the prologue in one of her literary works, *Small Island* (2004), which glorifies Levy as being the first author "to carry of the double in the same 12 months" through the awards: the

Whitbread Novel Award and Orange Prize for Fiction in 2004 (Ezard, Ward, 2005). Thoroughly the first chapter will reveal how Levy's *Small Island* examines the interracial and intercultural encounters on the path of the ideological transformation of post-war identities through the story of two British and two Caribbean characters: Queenie, Bernard, Hortense, and Gilbert. The prologue in *Small Island* has a key role in the construction of ideological transformation, which starts with Queenie, a white Englishwoman since it lights a torch for the fossils of a new understanding through Queenie's realization of her mistake in her retrospection. Besides, Queenie's indifference compared to her neighbours transgresses the racial ideology when she feels the warmth of an African man's hand. Queenie's handshake with an African man in the prologue buries the hierarchy of cultures and races and the stereotypical perception of racial and cultural differences in history. Accordingly, the prologue foreshadows Queenie's role in the future of multicultural England as a landlady who opens her doors to immigrants for shelter. On the other hand, the birth of Queenie's mixed-race baby, Michael signals the existence of heterogeneous identities and cultures in London. However, Queenie's inability to maintain her motherhood unveils that racial ideology does not only impact immigrants, it also impacts the white population. Therefore, Queenie is also the victim of racial ideology despite her Englishness. In this respect, the first chapter will unfold Queenie's symbolic connection with Queen Victoria, the head of the Victorian Age, and how this connection serves a purpose for the significance of motherhood which Queenie could not perform because of the racial ideology of her time. Besides, the first chapter will also compare and contrast which ways male and female characters approach cultural diversity and the construction of multiculturalism. The first chapter uncovers that the female characters display an optimistic image of the multicultural future through the time they have spent, whereas the same optimistic image of the multicultural future is not forged by the male characters. In addition, the first chapter will reveal in which ways *Small Island* reflects the justification of the first-generation Caribbean immigrants' sense of belonging to their mother country, England, for the existence of heterogeneous cultures and identities through their service on behalf of England during the Second World War. As Irene Pérez-Fernández in her work, *Representing Third Spaces, Fluid Identities and Contested Spaces in Contemporary British Literature* states that:

The idea underlying the logic of the new-comers was that of coming to the 'Mother Country'; a country that was waiting for them; a country portrayed in the colonial imaginary as a place of opportunities; a country immigrants from the British ex-colonies were eager to defend. (2009: 149)

Therefore, *Small Island* alerts the forgotten sacrifice of many soldiers from the former colonies with the RAF (Royal Air Force) soldiers, who forge a strong bond between England and themselves. This bond shows how these soldiers have grown up under the wings of colonial education, which enhances their perception of the mother country as a dreamland where they can fulfill their desires. However, the harsh social reality of post-war London ruins the dreams of many immigrants. The Second World War as, a historical moment, carries an instrumental meaning for their devotion to England as many soldiers from the former colonies of England sacrifice their lives for the welfare of their mother country in the novel. The role played on behalf of England in WWII by immigrants inscribes the justification of their belonging and the birth of hybrid cultures and identities on British soil. After this justification, the birth of heterogeneous cultures and identities reigns in a new understanding. Therefore, the birth of a mixed-race baby finalizes the stereotypical rotten formats and empowers the justification of the heterogeneous identities since the baby lights an endless candle to the future of multicultural London, as the first chapter explores further.

On the other hand, Zadie Smith, as half Jamaican and half British writer, examines hybridization and (un)belonging in her literary works. Her debut novel, *White Teeth* (2000), is one of them, which uncovers the questions of identity, hybridity, and gender through the portrayal of the diverse cultural origins of these families: the Iqbals as Bangladeshi, the Joneses as mixed Jamaican and British, Chalfens as Polish and Catholic, Jewish heritage. Throughout the combination of these families with the variety of their cultures, the second chapter will reveal how *White Teeth* deconstructs the fixation and certainty of homogeneous cultures within the image of subversion of predictability, which reverses the significance of racial and cultural roots. The indeterminate genetics of Irie's baby is one of the examples of subversion that silences the fixation of cultural and racial roots of individuals as homogeneous. As James Acheson and Sarah C. E. Ross in their work, *The Contemporary British Novel Since 1980* remark that *White Teeth* reveals a

process in which “different traditions, cultures and identities merge to create a new, superior, unified third term” (2005: 108). Therefore, Smith’s *White Teeth* blinks to the existence of heterogeneous identities and cultures through a deep transformation of society. In this regard, *White Teeth* unveils the significance of a sense of belonging for immigrants. The service of the immigrants in the Second World War allows them to experience such a rare friendship, which foregrounds a sense of togetherness for the sake of England. While Smith exposes the significance of friendship for the concept of cultural transfer, she also uncovers the victory of England on the battleground is not only based on white British success. Therefore, the inclusion of the Second World War as a reminder of the forgotten role of many soldiers from the former colonies ascend to the top of the subject as the justification for their belonging and devotion to England. In the second chapter, the blending process of Englishness and the concept of cultural transfer will be explored. The second generation liberates themselves through their cultural exchanges even though the first generation especially Samad observes cultural interaction as a Western invasion. The conflict between the first generation and the second generation reflects that the hierarchic racial and cultural categorization becomes a myth that the second generation has finally defeated within the third generation, the birth of Irie’s baby with complex heritages. In this regard, the second generation internalizes the racial categorization of what they have learned from the first generation while the first generation observes racial integration in London as corruption.

On the other hand, interracial marriages and intercultural relations play a significant role in the resolution of racial tensions. Jamaican Clara’s marriage with English Archie resolves the racial tension of Bowden’s matrilineal past that alerts the initial trauma based on Clara’s grandmother, Ambrosia. However, Hortense Bowden’s love for her mixed-race granddaughter, Irie not only breaks the shell of racial ideology but also cleans of the past of Bowdens, as the second chapter explores further. In addition, James Acheson and Sarah C. E. Ross point out that Smith not only forges heterogeneous cultures but also “rejects versions of multiculturalism which preserve the authority of the dominant ethnicity” (2005: 108). For example, Irie Jones, the daughter of a Jamaican mother and a British father desires to obtain European white female beauty standards to attract Millat. Her desire to escape her mixed racial roots implies her passion for Englishness just like being Chalfens, as

she claims that: “the Chalfens were more English than the English” (328). While the middle-class Chalfen family reflects perfect Englishness, the story ironically unfolds the truth about the white Chalfens’ roots as Polish, Catholic, and Jewish backgrounds. Thus, *White Teeth* disrupts the homogeneity of the Chalfen’s background as English, yet Irie wants to become one of them:

Irie knew the deal she was about to make... she wanted it, she wanted to merge with Chalfens, to be one flesh; separate from the chaotic, random flesh of her own family and transgenically fused with another. A unique animal. A new breed. (284)

Irie’s body shape and hair reflect the portrayal of her mixed-racial heritage. However, her willingness to acquire European white female beauty reflects her rejection of her genetic origin since her transformation starts with her hair in the hairdresser: “intent upon fighting her gene” (Smith 273). Her disappointment after her failed transformation pushes her to a journey where she finds out the insignificance of cultural and racial roots through the birth of her baby. Therefore, the end of the novel merges these three families with Irie’s unnamed baby with indeterminate genetics and remarks on insignificant cultural and racial roots as the biological father of Irie’s baby will be hidden and even scientifically unknown forever as the second chapter explores further.

The conclusion will remark on comparing and contrasting the ways the first- and second-generation Londoners approach cultural differences in *White Teeth* and *Small Island*. Besides, it will reveal the conflict between the first generation and the second generation of post-war identities regarding the cultural expectations of the first generation from the second generation. Thereby, this thesis will remark on how the second generation internalizes the hierarchic racial categorization although the hierarchic racial categorization becomes a myth that the second generation has defeated through the birth of heterogeneous identities and cultures. In this introduction, the significance of the concept of hybridity and cultural and racial diversity in the construction of multicultural London has been explained. Depending on the construction of multicultural London, the introduction has explained how the emergence of hybridity in London deconstructs the mythical monolithic cultures by spreading differences in identities to the generations. The following two chapters will explore cultural transfer and deconstruction of homogeneous cultures through

hybridity in *White Teeth* and *Small Island* and how these two contemporary women writers; Andrea Levy and Zadie Smith contribute to the construction of multicultural London through the harmonious coexistence of diverse cultures and racial identities in London within the merge of cultures, races, and ideologies.

II. THE IDEOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATION IN *SMALL ISLAND*

Small Island, written by Andrea Levy, was published in 2004. It is one of the contemporary novels that brings a critical light into the depth of the homogeneous culture and identity and reflects the transformation of society within the birth of heterogeneous cultures and identities in London. The novel displays a “pluralistic narrative” to present a comprehensive understanding of the stories and viewpoints of the characters (Ellis, 2012: 80). The plot is set in 1948 London and follows the lives of two English and two Jamaican characters: Queenie, Bernard, Hortense, and Gilbert. Their paths intersect under the themes of prejudice, love, and war in post-war England. Hortense, a Jamaican-educated woman who has fancy dreams of an English house, marries Gilbert, a Jamaican RAF (Royal Air Force) serviceman, to guarantee her passage to her mother country, England. Gilbert who has served in the RAF on behalf of the British army, is stuck with his complex feelings about his homeland, Jamaica, and his mother country after his migration to England. Even though both Gilbert and Hortense encounter the harsh social reality, which defeats the portrait of England as a dreamland in their minds, their entry to England also sparks the beginning of multicultural London under the roof of Queenie Bligh, a working-class woman whose husband is presumed dead in the war. Queenie Bligh, a white English landlady maintains the house as a matter of survival in her time and accepts the lodgers, mostly Jamaican servicemen, including Michael Roberts, with whom she falls in love and gets pregnant. Their crossed paths in Queenie’s house open the possibility of an interaction of cultural and racial differences, even though the first impression of this interaction indicates cultural misunderstandings. However, female characters both Queenie and Hortense develop a tacit understanding of the positive interaction for the concept of multiculturalism despite their cultural and racial differences, whereas male characters are unable to sustain a shared understanding of the future of multicultural London. Queenie’s husband, Bernard, as a traumatized English soldier is confused with the changes that have

taken place in his environment and home. After his unexpected return blows down Queenie's independent status as a landlady and her fantasy of pregnancy. At the end of the novel, although Bernard accepts fathering Queenie's mixed-race baby from her brief affair with the Jamaican serviceman, Queenie gives her baby to her Jamaican tenants, Hortense and Gilbert, for a proper environment according to the race and skin color of the baby. While Queenie's sacrifice of her motherhood undermines Victorian essential roles of motherhood, it also unveils that the ideology of post-war England is not fit enough for growing a mixed-race baby as a white couple. However, Queenie's mixed-race baby, Michael remains a powerful symbol of hope for the future of multiculturalism on British soil.

The indications of Windrush migration as the first wave of migration movement in the novel serve a significant purpose in the seed of heterogeneous cultures and identities in England. Thus, this chapter will emphasize the experience of the Windrush generation, as the first-generation immigrants from the former colonies of Britain in England. As Kim Evelyn in her work, states the beginning of the migration movement as: "the arrival of the Empire Windrush carrying 492 West Indian migrants to Britain is treated as the symbolic start of this migration movement" (2013:130). With the arrival of the Windrush generation to England, London became the contact zone in which different cultures first clash and then transfer their differences to each other through cultural and racial interactions. In this sense, this movement becomes one of the primary steps of the multicultural beginnings, which brings about the collision and intersection of diverse cultures to remap the social construction of London. The first glance at the mix of differences in society reveals cultural and racial misapprehensions and prejudices, which weaken the progression of the construction of multicultural London. However, as the plot progresses, signs of mutual and tacit understanding in the novel shed light on the path of multiculturalism, and the characters start to connect on a deeper level. Therefore, Andrea Levy does not only criticize the racial and cultural prejudices, seen as obstacles in front of a sense of unity in England, but she also grants a voice to provide "the possibilities for a shared cultural discourse and sense of community through the space of writing" (Knepper, 2013: 2). So, while Levy's *Small Island* reveals an intense outlook on the interaction of the characters from different upbringings and races for the construction of togetherness under the concept of

multiculturalism, it also reminds of the “forgotten role” played by the Caribbean RAF servicemen in the Second World War. (Baxter, James, 2014: 41). Inscribing such a historical moment in the novel points out the justification of the first-generation Caribbean immigrants’ belonging to Britain to strengthen a sense of togetherness and cooperation despite the interracial and intercultural tensions. Thus, *Small Island* revives the devotion of the Caribbean soldiers to the mother country and supplies “new awareness of the historical presence of blacks and Asians in the British Forces” (Korte, 2009: 35). As a result of this, the powerful bond between the former colonies and Britain in the novel justifies the existence of heterogeneous cultures and identities through the interaction of differences in England. For instance, Gilbert, is one of the volunteer RAF servicemen who forges a deep bond with the mother country as he narrates:

Your own mummy talks of Mother all the time. ‘oh, mother is a beautiful woman — refined, mannerly and cultured’. Your daddy tells you, ‘Mother thinks of you as her children. Like the Lord above, she takes care of you from afar. (139)

His narration shows how he grew up under the shadow of the mother country, that caring and cultured mother in a distant relationship. This intimate bond with a powerful construction of the mother image is an indication of his sense of belonging to England since the powerful image of the mother country surrounds his mind and itches his whole parts for taking a step on behalf of England at the edge of the war. As Gilbert narrates: “One day, mother calling — she is troubled, she need your help. Your mummy, your daddy say go. Leave home, leave familiar, leave love” (139). His devotion to the mother country is described beyond his connection to his family or loved one, so he is ready to fight on behalf of England next to Tommy Atkins. It is possible to understand that his parents raise him with the magic of the mother country and his position as a RAF soldier in the British army mirrors the source of their pride. Besides, Hortense’s cousin, Michael Roberts, a Jamaican RAF serviceman, shares the same fate with Gilbert, as he leaves his family behind for the sake of England and glitters her mother’s pride as she reflects:

He has gone to England with the purpose of joining the Royal Air Force They need men like my son. Men of courage and good breeding. There is to be a war over there. The Mother Country is calling men like my son to be

heroes whose families will be proud of them (59).

Michael's mother's words show that she cares less about her son's life than the welfare of England and that she seems ready to lose him on the battleground. In addition to this, his son's courage becomes the core of her powerful image in Jamaica. Therefore, Levy gives voice to the forgotten contribution of many volunteer soldiers from the former colonies. Thus, she rips the silence of the contribution of the Caribbean soldiers in the war and unfolds the justification of their belonging to England and the diverse cultural and racial unity in England. In this respect, Levy invokes Winston Churchill's quote as an epigraph: "Never in the field of human conflict has so much been owed by so many to so few" to emphasize the absolute sacrifice that Britain has owed to the former colonies and the RAF servicemen in the World War II (531). As Claire Allen in her work, *London Fiction at the Millennium* states that using Churchill's famous quote after the victory of the Battle of Britain, the novel "reminds the reader of the many soldiers fighting for Britain from the colonies" (2020: 35). Referencing such a remarkable symbol of Britain's consistency and unity allows Levy to ironically expose the lack of cultural and racial embrace in post-war England for the first-generation immigrants. Yet, the inclusion of the contribution of the Caribbean soldiers to the British Force as an epitome of their sense of belonging to England shows their deeper connection to England and justification of the emergence of hybrid cultures and identities on British soil.

However, Levy does not keep herself from reflecting on the harsh social reality that affected the first generation after the Windrush migration in post-war England. Therefore, *Small Island* reveals Britain's lack of recognition of immigrants from the colonies, which eventually triggers a sense of disappointment after their fancy dreams about England. Even though the cities of Britain were mostly damaged and in need of immigrants from the colonies for reconstruction, they endured the challenges of low-paying jobs and housing after their migration to England. While the characters experience a crisis of belonging and start inwardly questioning their place, the harsh social reality of post-war England cracks the idealized image of the mother country in their minds. For instance, Gilbert's inability to find a house pushes him into a position in which he is trapped by his complex feelings: "So how many gates I swing open? How many houses I knock on? Let me count the doors that opened slow and shut quick without even me breath managing to get inside" (215).

Encountering the reality of the racial and cultural norms in post-war British society shakes his dreams for England, and he begins to question his place in England and the value of the devotion that he has shown on the battlefield on behalf of England. However, at the bottom of Gilbert's despair, his path intersects with Queenie Bligh, a white English landlady, who lights a torch for the future of multicultural London as she offers her available rooms to the Caribbean immigrants including Gilbert and Hortense. In this sense, Queenie breaks the shells of racial and cultural norms and opens a new layer for the concept of multiculturalism by accepting Caribbean lodgers in her inherited house from her husband, as the following section explores further.

On the other hand, Hortense, a Jamaican woman also encounters the reality of post-war conditions after she arrives in England. After all her dreams about England and English culture within the frame of her colonial education, her encounter with post-war conditions destroys her fancy dreams and reminds her that she is a foreigner in her mother country, England. Even though her practical marriage with Gilbert provides her ticket to England, her marriage does not embellish her dreams of having an English house yet she supposes her husband, Gilbert owns the house, and she rings the doorbell by pushing her "finger to hear the ding-a-ling, ding-a-ling", and discovers her place as a stranger in England with the symbol of the non-ringing doorbell of Queenie's English house. Her disappointment with the doorbell of the English house reminds her of her memory about her Caribbean friend, Celia's depiction of her imaginary house in England: "I will have a big house with a bell at the front door and I will ring the bell" (11). Celia's imaginary house unveils Hortense's desire to live in an English house, however, the non-ringing doorbell as a means of rejection of her entrance to English society scratches her dreams in London. As Suzanne Scafe and Leith Dunn define the signification of the non-ringing doorbell:

By repeatedly ringing the silent doorbell, however, Hortense revisits the meanings of its silence, refusing both to be disabused of the image of England which she holds so dear and accept her status as a stranger in her English 'home'. (2020: 121)

Encountering the silence of the doorbell as a means of lack of welcome tears all of her dreams about her English house and her merge with English culture into pieces

and awakens a sense of alienation. Even though she believes that she is familiar with England and Englishness, she notices England and Englishness something is beyond her imagination. The room hired by Gilbert leaves ashes of her feelings that the shabby and unhygienic room burns down Hortense's dreams of an English house. It is a fact that her hopes and dreams of living in England and her fascination with English culture and England are many times described in the novel:

In the breath it took to exhale that one little word, England became my destiny. A dining-table in a dining room set with four chairs. A starched tablecloth embroidered with bows. Armchairs in the sitting room placed around a small wood fire. The house is modest – nothing fancy, no show – the kitchen small but with everything I need to prepare meals. We eat rice and peas on Sunday with chicken and corn, but in my English kitchen roast meat with two vegetables and even fish and chips bubble on the stove. (100-101)

Her perception of living in England reveals England as a destination where she adapts to a new way of life, releasing her aspirations and dreams with traditional English culture and food. Her passionate fondness for English culture in a way liberates her since she believes that the moment she arrives at her destination, her dreams come true. However, her dreams end up with an illusion as her disappointment constantly swirls around a question: "Just this?" (21). As Sonia Priyadarshni in her work states "England is personified as the epitome of perfect culture" for the Caribbean immigrants and "eventually the view on England ended in imaginative fantasy" (2020: 6). Therefore, the illusions in disguise of dreams flash a crisis of belonging in the minds of immigrants since facing the reality of the harsh conditions of post-war England pierces the middle of their aspirations. On the other hand, her husband, Gilbert does not experience something unfamiliar to his wife as he mistakenly believes that "opportunity ripened in England as abundant as a fruit on Jamaican trees" (98). However, racial and cultural prejudices of his time drown his dreams and hopes into beneath waves as Gilbert ultimately releases his feelings about the unrecognition of the mother country: "She offers you no comfort after your journey. No smile. No welcome. Yet she looks down at you through lordly eyes and says 'Who the bloody hell are you?'" (139). The unrecognition of the mother country is metaphorically narrated by Gilbert, and it converts the romanticized and idealized mother image into an unwelcoming and haughty one. It is

a fact that the enormous influence of the colonial era surrounds the minds of the immigrants that the mother country is a land of freedom and dreams that offers a fresh life with various opportunities to her children. However, Britain's lack of recognition of its former colonies on British soil after the Windrush migration triggers a crisis of belonging in the Caribbean characters. However, the hints of ideological and societal transformation start with Queenie Bligh, a white English landlady who composes all pieces of mosaics into one picture for the beginning of multicultural England in her residence.

Regarding cultural and ideological transformation, it is a fact that beginning with the period before the Second World War to beyond the post-war reflects the clashing process and the continuous transformation of cultures and ideologies in England. In this regard, the novel deliberately begins with a prologue that is based on a retrospect of Queenie's childhood memory when she as an English child experiences the first impression of cultural and racial differences at the 1924 British Empire Exhibition. While her first impression reveals the racial ideology of her time with a frame of historical encounters between black and white people, her reaction to cultural and racial differences also catches a glimpse of a new understanding that breaks the walls of racial ideology. As Alicia Ellis states: the prologue reflects a broader perspective than Queenie's first impression since it frames "part of a greater story of historical encounters in Britain and throughout empire" (2012: 69). However, Queenie's retrospection brings about a new awareness of racial and cultural encounters since it stirs up her personal growth. As the first paragraph of the prologue points out Queenie's awareness of her confusion and mistake while it also reflects a broad perspective on the transition of a new understanding as she narrates:

I thought I'd been to Africa. Told all my class I had. Early Bird, our teacher, stood me in front of the British flag—she would let no one call it the common Union Jack: 'It's the flag of Empire not a musical turn.' And I stood there as bold as brass and said, 'I went to Africa when it came to Wembley.' It was then that Early Bird informed me that Africa was a country. 'You're not usually a silly girl, Queenie Buxton,' she went on, 'but you did not go to Africa, you merely went to the British Empire Exhibition, as thousands of others did. (1)

The prologue unleashes a sign of a new understanding through Queenie's mistake in

assuming that the place she went to is Africa by the time her teacher corrects her that the place she visited is the British Empire Exhibition. This retrospection as a means of realizing her mistake becomes a positive vehicle for her self-awakening and her future contribution to the beginning of multiculturalism. As Alicia Ellis states that: “Queenie’s confession of her error is central to the articulation of a new understanding of the past, reinscribed through retrospection” (2012: 74). Therefore, the prologue aims to erase the stereotypical historical encounters of differences through Queenie’s reaction, which draws attention to the transition of the changes to come. In this respect, the British Empire exhibition is presented as a kind of exoticism that fascinates Queenie, while at the same time, it boosts Queenie’s interest and curiosity in other cultures and differences. The mix of Queenie’s curiosity and interest opens a new window for the racial and cultural dynamic from a child’s perspective. As a little girl, her first encounter with an African man highlights the exploration of racial and cultural dynamics, which categorize people according to their culture, race, and skin color as she describes:

But then suddenly there was a man. An African man. A black man who looked to be carved from melting chocolate. I clung to Emily but she shooed me off. He was right next to me, close enough so I could see him breathing. A monkey man sweating a smell of mothballs. Blacker than when you smudge your face with a sooty cork. The droplets of sweat on his forehead glistened and shone like jewels. His lips were brown, not pink like they should be, and they bulged with hair like bicycle tyres. His hair was woolly as a black shorn sheep. His nose, squashed flat, had two nostrils big as train tunnels. And he was looking down at me ... He could have swallowed me up, this big nigger man. But instead he said, in clear English, ‘Perhaps we could shake hands instead?’ ... And I shook an African man’s hand. It was warm and slightly sweaty like everyone else’s. (6)

Her first encounter unveils preconceived stereotypes about an African man as exotic and ‘Other’ as her description rejects his humanity. However, the politeness of the African man explodes Queenie’s racial prejudice and reshapes her mindset, which is previously influenced by her upbringing that her father reminds her that her life is designed as “the whole world at [her] feet” (6). As Shara Jamal Shahoyi and Juan Abdulla Ibrahim state: shaking hands with the African man is a possible sign of

“Queenie accepting the ‘Other’ later in the novel instead of discriminating them” (2019: 4). The moment of shaking his hands and feeling the warmth of the African man concretizes shared humanity and interaction that the novel sets an effective layer for her understanding of race and culture. On the other hand, Queenie’s farm helpers, Graham and Emily, are the product of their time since they embody the illustration of preconceived stereotypical misconceptions against black people. Graham’s imperialistic attitude reveals his impression in the exhibition since he observes the around as a kind of spectacle. For example, when they see a black woman in the dirt and “her hands weaving cloth on a loom”, Graham does not retain himself comparing the technology of his time with her culture as he says: “we’ve got machines that do all that now” (5). After Emily confirms him with her body language, he extends it further by saying that: “They’re not civilised. They only understand drums” (5). Graham denies their humanity and categorizes them according to their culture and race. Emily also wonders about the red dots in the middle of the black women’s heads and urges Queenie to ask about their meaning. Yet, Queenie’s mother prevents her “in case the dots meant they were ill – in case they were contagious” (5). It is possible to understand that Queenie’s environment is full of people who are biased against black people. However, Queenie does not label something unfamiliar as fearful like her relatives and transgresses racial and cultural categorizations through warm handshaking. While the prologue frames the transition of her childhood ideology to adult, it also provides a sign of her personal growth with the change in her understanding of race and culture. Her experience of shaking the hand of an African man at the British Empire Exhibition in the “Prologue” foreshadows the upcoming changes in Queenie's future relationship with the immigrants from Britain’s former colonies and her role in the future of multicultural England as a mother of a mixed-race baby.

After the intense reflection on the glimpse of Queenie’s personal development on the racial and cultural differences in the prologue, her acceptance of the Jamaican immigrants in her house concretizes her open-mindedness for individuals from different heritages. The signs of her difference in her society have been reflected throughout the novel and her strong desire to travel the world and discover the unknown become one of the signs of her sophisticated nature. In addition, her choice to be a vegetarian as a butcher's daughter draws attention to her rebellious and

eye-catching nature towards her family and their lifestyles as Sarah Brophy states that: “Queenie’s refusal to eat meat or to participate in the slaughter of animals marks her as a principled recusant eager to embrace a more expansive, more sophisticated world than that of her parents” (2019: 12). Unlike her family, she does not share the same nutrition plan with her family for her health and development, and is different from her society with her interest in the unknown and the unconventional, symbolizing the establishment of a new understanding for the future. Her sophisticated nature from her early years foreshadows her influential role in her society as an English landlady. Thus, she opens her doors to the Caribbean RAF servicemen and immigrants who she thinks “deserve a bit of home comfort” (290). In this respect, she challenges societal stigma and stereotypical cultural and racial norms and flags for the future of multiculturalism in her English community. Even though her neighbours: Mr. Todd and Blanche, do not respect Queenie’s approval of black tenants, Queenie never hesitates to block their thoughts from influencing her mindset. For instance, Blanche, one of the neighbours of Queenie draws a thin line between races with her symbolic name, which means white color in French, warns Queenie about her Jamaican tenants:

How can you think of being a woman alone in a house with coloureds?’
Blanche said. She warned me that they had different ways from us and know nothing of manners. They washed in oil and smelt foul of it. Sent her husband to reason with me because he knew all about blacks. (116)

Blanche considers ‘coloureds’ as a lack of humanity, saying that they are frightening, especially for a woman living alone. Blanche brings her husband, Morris into the subject to reflect the exaggeration of Queenie’s approval of immigrants as if only male power can handle the problem. Thus, she points out Queenie’s action of approving immigrants in her residence as dangerous and problematic for a woman living alone. However, Queenie does not share the same perception as she is willing to provide a home for the immigrants which shows her open-mindedness for the construction of multicultural England. In addition to this, Queenie’s other neighbour, Mr. Todd whose eyes are always on Queenie in the absence of her husband sticks his nose into Queenie’s domestic life and constantly complains about the immigrants and the corruption of the street: “Darkies! I’d taken in darkies next door to him. But not just me. There were others living around the square. A few more up the road a bit.

His concern, he said, was that they would turn the area into a jungle'' (113). The depiction of his observation is the reflection of the racial and cultural prejudice against Jamaican immigrants in post-war England. Therefore, Mr. Todd sees change as fear and fosters a strong bias and discrimination against immigrants. However, even though the racial mindset surrounds the whole corners of Queenie's living space, she does not pay attention to their concerns and keeps signalling for the beginning of multicultural London. Queenie as a white English woman struggles against the deep-seated ideology of her society and challenges the general understanding of the opposition between English residents and Jamaican immigrants. Her house is presented as a microcosm of post-war London where the different cultures clash and transfer their differences for heterogeneous cultures in England. Although the rooms that she offered to the Jamaican immigrants have very limited facilities, Queenie's role in providing a place for the immigrants builds a channel for the interaction of differences and the rise of multiculturalism in England.

Although this interaction is based on cultural misunderstandings at first, it later gives birth to a mutual understanding and recognition which reverses racial and cultural tension that has been normalized throughout history. The seed of this co-existence and mutual understanding show that not all of the characters are imprisoned by the racial mindset yet, they reflect the "possibilities for intimacy, community, and a multiracial future" (Brophy, 2009: 1). Although a deep-seated racial and cultural prejudice reigns in the minds of characters as a barrier against the cultural and racial integration in England, Shara Jamal Shahoyi and Juan Abdulla Ibrahim in their work point out that: "the narrative highlights the beginning of the co-existence of different races" (2019: 12). Therefore, Queenie's narration plays a significant role in challenging the societal racial and cultural preconceptions for the beginning of multiculturalism. As Sarah Brophy in her work *Entangled Genealogies: White Femininity on the Threshold of Change in Andrea Levy's Small Island* states that Queenie's relationship with her black tenants disrupts the portrait of an elderly white victimized landlady which is featured in Enoch Powell's infamous speech, 1968 Rivers of Blood, that "the victimized lady is terrorized by her young black neighbors that she no longer leaves her portion of the house" (2009: 4). Thus, her relationship with her tenants and her liberal attitude bring a new understanding that suppresses the racial and cultural tensions created over the years. On the other hand,

the peaceful image of Queenie's relationship with her tenants distorts the colonial gaze of victim and victimizer. Although the cultural and racial heritage of the characters blocks a peaceful relationship because of strong biases, the characters eventually embrace and understand each other through shared hardship. For instance, Queenie's relationship with her Jamaican tenant, Hortense, breaks the walls of deep-seated racial ideology, and builds a tacit understanding between these women characters even though their conversations are at first based on cultural misapprehensions. It is possible barrier that they struggle to understand each other because of their lack of cultural understanding as their conversation reveals:

'Cat got your tongue?' she said. What cat was she talking of? Don't tell me there was a cat that must also live with us in this room. 'My name's Mrs Bligh,' she carried on. 'But you can call me Queenie, if you like. Everyone here does. Would you like that?' The impression I received was that she was talking to me as if I was an imbecile. An educated woman such as I. So I replied, 'Have you lost your cat?' (227)

While Queenie wonders about the silence that Hortense is reluctant to speak, Hortense completely misunderstands her since she is not familiar with Queenie's colloquial expression. This is a possible example of cultural and racial misapprehension which turns into a barrier to communication, but Hortense, out of pride, does not show her confusion about Queenie's expression and replies with a pointless question. Although both Queenie and Hortense are biased towards each other, they later become more understanding and empathetic individuals towards each other as they succumb to common challenges. The recipe of fish and chips shared by Queenie after Hortense's kindly request: "Can you perchance tell me ... How do you make a chip?" might be one of the first cultural exchanges that Hortense learns cooking a traditional British food from her landlady (232). Hortense misunderstands the recipe for fish and chips and she boils chips instead of fries, yet, her enthusiasm for cooking British food remarks on her willingness to adapt to English culture through her cultural interaction with her landlady, Queenie. Therefore, Queenie's recipe for fish and chips marks a deeper connection to Hortense and her sincerity towards her Jamaican tenants despite cultural and racial prejudices. In addition to this, the conversation below reveals how they sail a complex relationship and how they unconsciously feel the cultural and racial division to the

core as Hortense describes her first conversation with Queenie:

Well, we could go if you like - to the pictures.’ And again she took my breath from me. Is this woman wanting to be friendly or is she wanting a friend? I was confused. What class of white woman was she? ‘Well, if you want to go to the shops or anything I could show you how to use your ration book...’ Then she looked upon me, puzzled. ‘Can you understand what I’m saying?’ ‘Of course,’ I said quietly. ‘Good. Well, give me a knock and I’ll let you know when I’m ready to go out.’ She then took her hand and placed it on my arm. She leaned in too close to me to whisper, ‘It’s all right. I don’t mind being seen in the street with you. You will find I’m not like most. It doesn’t worry me to be seen out with darkies.’ Now, why should this woman worry to be seen in the street with me? After all, I was a teacher and she was only a woman whose living was obtained from the letting of rooms. If anyone should be shy it should be I. And what is a darkie?... (231)

Queenie’s social gesture catches a glimpse of a sign of a new unity with her tenant, as she explicitly ensures Hortense about her difference from her society. However, Queenie’s gesture confuses Hortense since she is highly prejudiced against Queenie’s approach and constantly questions her actual intention. It is a fact that Hortense, a black woman in England, is full of prejudices as she confuses encountering an English “blue-eye-yet-black-hair woman” in England and believes that anyone who has a darker complexion than her “golden skin” is inferior to her (527). Although Londoners barely understand Hortense’s English because of her accent, yet she believes that her English is lofty enough that her “recitation of ‘Ode to a Nightingale’” have earned her “a merit star” in Jamaica (16-17). In this respect, Hortense is also a prey of the colonial education in disguise as she sees herself refined and superior and is willing to mark her social status by “[her] coat clean, [her] gloves freshly washed and a hat upon [her] head” (329). Thus, her social status, being an English teacher, and her well-prepared appearance become the only factor to compare herself with the white population. It is obvious that not just because Hortense finds Queenie ill-educated but she also finds her shabbily dressed as she describes Queenie’s style: “in a scruffy housecoat with no brooch or jewel, no glove or even a pleasant hat to lift the look a little” (330). Thus, Hortense’s internalized feelings against white population builds a wall against her relationship with Queenie,

yet Queenie's friendly gestures decompose the fossils of racial and cultural prejudices against differences. While their complex relationship reveals the influence of racial, social, and cultural dynamics on their relationship but also marks a sign of a tacit friendship despite their differences. Towards the end of the novel, their paths cross as they become mothers of the same baby and build "cross-racial sisterhood" regardless of social or racial differences (Courtman, 2012: 85). While Hortense, the midwife who helps Queenie's delivery becomes the adoptive mother of her baby, Queenie is the biological mother of a biracial baby whom she has to leave.

Although these two women come from different upbringings, cultures, and races, they both experience similar hardships in different layers that play a role in building a deep bond and a sense of understanding with each other. They are "motivated by a desire for social mobility" since they both feel stuck in a male-dominated society and eventually involve pragmatic marriages to make their dreams true (Baxter & James 2014: 74). Queenie marries Bernard, a wealthy English man to live in London and moves away from a life on her family's pig farm, while Hortense marries Gilbert, an RAF soldier to move to London and leaves Jamaica behind, saying, "a single woman cannot travel on her own - it would not look good. But a married woman might go anywhere she pleased." (100) As both grow up outside of London, they experience a sense of alienation in their new society and environment after their marriage. However, their pragmatic marriages are dull and loveless ones that disappoint their prospects of living a better life in London and highlight their similar experience of a sense of marital disillusionment. It is true that Queenie as a young newlywed woman desires to increase her sexual affair with her husband in order to become pregnant yet her marriage ends up living with her traumatized father-in-law, Arthur Bligh whom Queenie names as "a wedding present" (171). Her unfortunate marriage reflects how she meticulously prepares herself for the return of her husband, even though Bernard barely notices her sexual aura as she narrates:

All that lily-of-the-valley scent. Hours spent waving my hair and powdering my face to porcelain perfection. Silk stockings, red lips, and hands as soft as lah-di-dah. And I was married to a man who wouldn't have noticed if I'd come to bed in my gas mask. (259)

Bernard's reluctance to have sex with her fades Queenie's belief in her marriage.

Queenie cannot satisfy her sexual desires with her husband and eventually, Bernard's duty in the RAF expands the gap between the couple more than ever. Hence, she experiences a sense of disillusionment after her marriage because her husband does not fulfill her expectations in bed. On the other hand, Hortense's pragmatic marriage does not help her owning an English house in London as the couple ends up being tenants of Queenie. The lack of facilities and the unhygienic conditions of the room hired by Gilbert shake her dreams of a cultural English house and undermine the importance of her pragmatic marriage. Thus, despite their differences, these two women connect to each other in a profound understanding and gradually recognize each other as they experience similar senses on the road of being the biological and adaptive mother of a mixed-race baby.

In contrast to female characters, there is not any bond between male characters. Male characters aggressively approach each other and close a possible door for a multicultural future. As Ranu Samantrai in his work, *History's Subjects Forming the Nation in Andrea Levy's Small Island* states: "mutual recognition between men is blocked" whereas the cultural exchange and interaction between women build recognition between women and leak hope for the construction of multicultural London. (Samantrai, 2013: 80). For instance, Bernard is not a character who promises a multicultural future as he is the product of his era and his narrative reflects how he is traditionalist and narrow-minded. He struggles to maintain his life with the changes that have taken place in England. His hostility towards the immigrants remarks on the impossibility of his connection with them as Bruce Woodcock in his work, *Small Island, Crossing Cultures* states that Bernard is "the epitome of insularity and prejudice" (2008: 52). Besides, Bernard's "violent sexual act imposed on the child" in a brothel before returning home from the war reveals the "hegemonic power seen as a form of rape" and his malefaction and ruthlessness (Duboin, 2011: 22). His description of the image of the young Indian prostitute who he later realizes her age as "fourteen or even twelve. A small girl" dehumanizes himself as he rejects her part of humanity saying that "her hand no bigger than a monkey's paw" (413-414). Bernard's ruthless attitude towards the young girl portrays his barbarity and his desire for domination as he "grabbed her hair into a bunch. Held it firm." and commands: "Doggy. On your hands and knees" (413). However, he eventually confesses that he feels "like a beast" and sees "the fear in

her black eyes – harmless as a baby’s – was denouncing [him] as depraved” and starts questioning his conscience by asking himself: “What was I doing?” (414). His violent sexual act in the brothel brings about his fall since he mistakenly assumes that he is diagnosed with syphilis. His delayed return from the war becomes the price of his ill manners since he supposes that he is at the edge of death. However, he is shocked when he encounters changes happening at home and in Nevern Street. As soon as he arrives in his home, he reflects on his instant reaction to the Jamaican lodgers: “These people have to leave. I won’t have wogs in my house” (473). Even though he is broken enough after his war experience, he still carries hints of racism. He declines the existence of the Jamaican tenants in his house even after the powerful speech for peace and unity made by Gilbert:

Your white skin. You think it makes you better than me. You think it give you the right to lord it over a black man. But you know what it make you? You wan’ know what your white skin make you, man? It make you white. That all man. White. No better than me. ... Am I to be the servant and you are the master for all time? No. Stop this, man. Stop it now. We can work together, Mr. Bligh. You no see? We must. Or else you just gonna fight me till the end? (525)

Gilbert’s powerful speech creates a sense of potential unity that crosses the borders of racial ideology. However, Bernard turns his back on the possibility of the unity requested by Gilbert and pours the harsh reality of his inability to connect the same channel into the hopes for multiculturalism, as he replies: “I’m sorry ... but I just can’t understand a single word you’re saying” (526). His inability to understand any single word reflects his reluctance for the construction of multiculturalism even though he later accepts fathering Queenie’s mixed-race baby. Even though Queenie has a chance to raise her mixed-race baby with her husband, she knows that Bernard is not ready to overcome racial ideology she states: “Bernard. One day he’ll do something naughty and you’ll look at him and think, The little black bastard, because you’ll be angry. And he’ll see it in your eyes” (521). Queenie’s statement points out the impossibility of social and cultural norms of her time to parent a mixed-race baby as a white couple since she cares about the welfare of her child more than her husband’s wish to provide a home for the baby. Kim Evelyn references Laura Albritton’s review in her work that “Bernard becomes a figure of stereotypical

British homogeneity and then, as his attitude very slowly begins to change, a figure of grudging acceptance” (2005: 236). In this respect, he embodies homogeneous culture which challenges the birth of heterogeneous cultures even after he reluctantly accepts fathering the baby and reflects a very gradual symptom of change. Therefore, *Small Island* does not present cultural and racial unity between male characters whereas female characters under the leadership of Queenie manage to build a new understanding and reflect a glimpse of multiculturalism despite their cultural and racial prejudices and misapprehension.

Before discussing the consequences of sacrificing Queenie’s motherhood, it is necessary to discuss the conflict between her personal expectations with social expectations from her marriage. Queenie’s Auntie Dorothy claims that Queenie has landed on her feet with endless rooms which come from her pragmatic marriage, yet, it brings about the conflicts between her desires and social expectations from her marriage. Queenie’s strong desire to be a mother is reflected many times in the novel since she makes clear that having a baby might bind her to the traditional family way despite the lack of sexual satisfaction from her marriage to Bernard, as she confesses: “Babies, that’s what I thought! All those warnings of things that could leave me in the family way” (260). Therefore, she oppresses her sexual dissatisfaction, and endeavors to stay connected to her husband and family by fulfilling societal expectations of her gender. Her awareness of unhappiness takes her to the road of a doctor and then to the vicar at St John’s Church for a remedy to her inability to become a mother. Her doctor does not say something she does not know whereas the vicar tells her the meaningless of giving birth to a baby to this world after all that happened in World War II. Yet, she knows that the problem is the lack of conjugal relations as she cannot “fall pregnant sitting on a toilet” and keeps reminding herself that: “sex every Saturday, Sunday and sometimes twice in the week for over a year should surely have left me with child” (260). However, Queenie is not sure if she takes pleasure in her sexual performance with her husband, Bernard. Consequently, her inability to succeed with her husband becomes an obstacle in the face of her dreams of being a mother. With the start of the war and her husband joining the war, their paths diverge and she realizes that nothing can quench her despair about not being able to get pregnant anymore. However, Bernard’s delay from the war causes her to presume that he is dead and she finds herself “lost in Africa again” as soon as

she sails a passionate and brief affair with Michael Roberts, a Jamaican RAF serviceman (291). Holding a powerful status as a single landlady in the absence of her timid husband opens up the possibilities of a new page in her life and eventually she unleashes her repressed desires for love and sexuality. Besides, her brief affair with Michael mirrors the transgression of racial, social, and cultural stereotypical taboos in post-war England since they embody the image of a zebra with “their legs twined and untwined together on the bed” (301). The consequence of her relationship with the Jamaican serviceman is her unexpected pregnancy and “a hummingbird in London” which is the metaphorical story of the national bird of Jamaica that Michael is surprised to see “in the middle of rubble and bricks... in the buses and bustle of a city... Piccadilly and Trafalgar Square” (299). The story of a hummingbird recited by Michael portrays the emblem of heterogeneous cultures and identities since it foreshadows Queenie’s upcoming mixed-race baby. However, the return of her husband and the birth of her mixed-race baby extinguish “Queenie’s fantasy of proud single motherhood” (Brophy, 2009: 16). As the racial reality of her baby and racial categories come to the fore, the birth of Queenie’s hybrid baby awakes her from her deep dream and leaves her alone with reality. Although both Queenie and her husband forgive each other, Queenie does not believe that they can raise the baby as a white couple. For this reason, Queenie’s sacrifice of motherhood reflects the suitable environment for a baby according to skin color and race.

On the question of Queenie’s sacrificial motherhood, the novel blinks the essential roles of Victorian motherhood. Queenie’s inability to mothering her mixed-race baby undermines the Victorian motherhood despite her symbolic connection to Queen Victoria. Victoria Buxton as the actual name of Queenie concretizes her link with Queen Victoria whose name is the greatest token of the British Empire in the Victorian era. As Queenie’s mother insists the vicar on the determination of her daughter’s name as “Queenie”, the vicar finalizes that: “Take our late queen,’ ... ‘her name, Mrs Buxton, was not Queen but Victoria” (235). So, her name gives clues about the embodiment of power, which links with Queen Victoria, just like her nickname, Queenie. It is well-known that Queen Victoria encouraged women of her time on the path of the “angel in the house” to become obedient to her husband and devoted to her children. As Jeanne M. Peterson in her work, *No Angels in the House: The Victorian Myth and the Paget Women* states the role of an angel: “In secular

terms the angel provided the home environment that promoted her husband's and children's well-being in the world'' (1984: 677). However, Queenie rejects being powerless and obedient since she shatters the pots of gender roles and accepts Jamaican lodgers into her house for multicultural London. Yet, she is the victim of the racial ideology of post-war England as she cannot sustain her sacred mothering ''because of the backward-thinking attitudes of those around her such as Bernard and Mr. Todd'' (Allen, 2020: 109). Queenie's unfulfilled maternal instinct scratches the most dignified calling of Victorian women since the racial ideology of her time forces her to sacrifice her motherhood because of the skin color of her baby. Thus, the social and racial understanding of its time is the reason for the separation of the baby from the biological mother and her inability to perform her motherhood. Her sacrifice becomes a sign of an unabated wound in her heart that shows how racial ideology affects not only the black population but also the white population in England. Her baby remains as a powerful symbol for the construction of the multicultural future as the baby is the ''literal manifestation of co-creation'' that his existence explicitly converges the characters around him (Samantrai, 2013: 75). Queenie's mixed-race baby as the face of the second generation is the mirror of heterogeneous cultural identity and the hope of multicultural England. Therefore, *Small Island* ''marks the beginning of present-day multicultural British society'' with the birth of the mixed-race baby (Fernandez, 2009: 150). In this respect, the ending of the novel points out the hybrid identity with the mixed-race baby, Michael who represents cultural and racial transitions in England as a glimpse of multicultural future in England.

Consequently, throughout this chapter, it was discussed Levy justifies the existence of heterogeneous identities and their sense of belonging on British soil since the immigrants from Britain's former colonies contributed to England on the battleground in the Second World War. Besides, the prologue unveils Queenie's role in providing a new understanding of racial and cultural differences which foreshadows Queenie's sophisticated nature and open-mindedness in her adult that she as a white English landlady accepts Jamaican immigrants in her house. Even though the first encounter of racial and cultural differences remarks on cultural and racial misapprehensions, the female characters in contrast to male characters build a tacit understanding and empathy for the beginning of multicultural London under the

roof of Queenie Bligh. While the unexpected pregnancy of Queenie signals the inevitable transformation of society, the sacrifice of her motherhood for a proper environment for the baby becomes a response to the sacred Victorian motherhood that she failed to fulfill. Yet, the mixed-race baby as the face of the second generation flags the beginning of multiculturalism in London.

III. THE BIRTH OF HETEROGENEOUS CULTURES AND IDENTITIES IN *WHITE TEETH*

White Teeth, written by Zadie Smith, was published in 2000 and rapidly became one of the constructive visions of multiculturalism through the deconstruction of fixation and certainty of homogeneous cultures. Therefore, *White Teeth* reflects the integration of diverse cultures with the change of society through the concept of multiculturalism which Lamia Tayeb states “as a deep transformation that operates within the family sphere to affect both the individual and society at large” (2021: 81). In contribution to a deep transformation, the novel is set in London, as considered the contact zone of diverse racial and cultural relations that blends Englishness through the lives of three families, the Iqbals as Bangladeshi, the Joneses as mixed Jamaican and British, and the Chalfens as Polish with Catholic, Jewish origins. The story begins with Archie Jones, a middle-class white Englishman’s failed suicide after his unsuccessful marriage with “Ophelia, a violet-eyed Italian with a faint moustache” (8). Fortunately, the local butcher Mo Hussein-Ismael saves Archie’s life. Despite the result of a coin toss for ending his life, Archie’s failed suicidal attempt is one of the symbols as the subversion of predictability against stability and fixation as the central issue in the novel. Thus, the interruption of this suicide symbolizes a second chance for Archie with a new outlook on life as a means of setting sail to new experiences and embracing life. After participating in a Jehovah’s Witness party, Archie first falls in love at first sight and then marries the Jamaican immigrant, Clara Bowden, who is trapped behind the bars of her mother’s strict religious lifestyle. A short time later, they have a hybrid daughter, Irie as the merge of English and Jamaican-British origins of her parents. Besides, the novel unfolds the Bangladeshi Iqbal family through the friendship between Archie and Samad, which is based on the Second World War. Regardless of belonging to different races and cultures, fighting on behalf of England under one roof encapsulates the birth of friendship and the sense of togetherness between Archie and Samad. After taking part in WWII, Samad immigrates to England and

marries Alsana Begum in a traditional arranged marriage, and a short time later, they have twins, Magid and Millat, on British soil. However, Samad asserts that living in the borders of England corrupts the souls of his sons, and the only remedy to save the soul is returning to the roots as he states: “‘roots were what saved, the ropes one throws out to rescue drowning men, to Save Their Souls’” (193). Therefore, he decides to send one of his sons, Magid to Bangladesh for being raised with the traditional and religious values of his time in Bangladesh. However, the separation of twins from one country to another causes the countereffect of Magid’s transformation into a proper Muslim, as Samad reveals the change of Magid as: “‘Mr. white trousered Englishman with his stiff upper-lip’”, while Millat who stays in London with his family as “‘fully paid-up green bow-tie-wearing fundamentalist terrorist’” by involving in the radical Islamic organization, KEVIN (The Keepers of the Eternal and Victorious Islamic Nation) (407). The novel also introduces the third family, the Chalfens, representing the white English middle class with their principle, Chalfenism through Joyce Chalfen, a horticulturist, and Marcus Chalfen, a geneticist, and their sons Joshua, Benjamin, Jack, and Oscar. The portrayal of the Chalfens is exclusively reflected through their intellectual lifestyle as the Chalfens considers themselves as the “‘inheritors of the enlightenment, the creators of the welfare state, the intellectual elite and the source of all culture’” (435). The Chalfens’ residence becomes the setting for the second generation where they gather and demonstrate their complex relationships in the face of the influence of the Chalfens’ lifestyle and intellectuality. At the end of the novel, the story ultimately intertwines the families to each other through the existence of Irie’s baby with indeterminate genetics. Having sex first with Millat and then with Magid on the same day brings about a chaotic ending because of the limitations in scientific methods of determining the biological father of the baby. Eventually, Irie raises the baby with Joshua Chalfen by turning the Chalfen’s pure familial line upside down. As Michael Perfect, in his work, *Contemporary Fiction of Multiculturalism* states that “‘the baby somewhat disrupts the neat Chalfen family tree that Marcus is so fond of showing off’” (2014: 82). Thus, the baby as the future generation of multicultural Britishness symbolically extends hybridity even further and blends the cultures of these three families into one body.

As regards the clash of differences, London as the contact zone of various

intercultural relations has become the heart of multiculturalism with the insertion of diverse cultures and races. *White Teeth*, through the presentation of the successive generations, remarks on the concept of multiculturalism as evolving on the path of heterogeneity (Dominic, 2003: 107). In this regard, Smith's *White Teeth* focuses on London and the streets of Willesden to reveal the blending process of Englishness through the cultural evolution of three families in a diaspora context. These families with different cultural heritages come together after the postcolonial migration and interracial marriages to transfer their striking cultural practices to each other. In this vein, the novel offers the concept of multiculturalism as a promise for the integration of differences with the replacement of the postcolonial trace of the past to the present integrations by blending cultural differences in the contact zone. In contribution to the replacement of the past, Michael Perfect suggests that: multicultural London unlocks a door to the possibilities for exchanging their cultural differences and where "Britain and its postcolonial migrants can ultimately be overcome and consigned to the past" (2014: 79). The characters from the second generation in *White Teeth* resolve the racial tensions yet the internalization of cultural and racial prejudices as a means of a myth still haunts the minds of the characters. Therefore, cultural integration contributes to the embrace of cultural heterogeneity by wiping the memory of the past with the power of cultural transfer. Postcolonial migration and interracial marriages play a significant role in mingling cultural differences by binding the characters together and then illustrating the cultural values through their lifestyle based on special festivals, food, and languages. Thus, *White Teeth*, in the words of Michael Perfect, as an "optimistic vision of the future of twenty-first-century multicultural London" demonstrates the clash of cultural diversity and the power of cultural transfer (2014: 95). Archie's second marriage flashes the power of cultural transfer as he finds his second spring with the remarriage after the end of his unsuccessful interracial marriage with Ophelia. The second marriage with the Jamaican, Clara Bowden, not only mixes the English and Jamaican cultures but also gives birth to Irie Jones, the hybrid identity, who later on extends hybridity even further with her pregnancy. Hence, the marriage between Clara and Archibald breaks the chains of racial ideology with the birth of their daughter, Irie, who is the present face of heterogeneous cultures and identities in London.

White Teeth reinforces the image of heterogeneous cultures through the replacement of postcolonial traces with interracial marriages. For example, *White Teeth* constantly repeats the teeth as significant symbols by being associated with the cultural and religious beliefs connected to the past and present. In addition to the name of the novel, the name of the chapters also includes profound symbolic associations between the characters and their origins. A well-known example is the chapter named “the root canals of Hortense Bowden” which deliberately refers to the origin of the Bowden family and their colonial past. Furthermore, the loss of Clara’s two front teeth after the bicycle accident also symbolically opens up a new page within the instant disconnection from the Jehovah’s Witnesses and her Jamaican roots. Therefore, the dentures, as the replacement of her original teeth, can be considered a new construction and acquisition of culture that liberates her through her interracial marriage with Archie Jones. The dentures, as her symbolic cultural transformation from Jamaican to English, bring about Clara regaining her cultural identity through her marriage to the Englishman Archie. Despite the objections of her mother, Clara marries Archibald and dodges herself from the core values of Jehovah and her mother. However, as Lamia Tayeb states the wall built by Clara against her mother prevents her daughter, Irie from reaching and compromising her cultural roots to “understand her Jamaican family past and unravel the secrets that explain the persistent inter-generational discord” (Tayeb, 2021: 87). However, Irie’s curiosity of exploring her familial past for her cultural roots and her self-image in the eyes of her society blasts the bricks of the wall, and eventually, she explores her Jamaican roots and matrilineal past. Irie’s journey to her grandmother, to her roots, unveils the unforgotten colonial memory of the Bowdens and reveals the reason behind her objection to Clara’s marriage with Archie as Hortense recounts: “Black and white never come to no good. De Lord Jesus never meant us to mix it up ... When you mix it up, nuttin’ good can come. It wasn’t *intended*. Except you’... as an afterthought” (384-385). It is possible to understand that Hortense preserves the stereotypical racial ideology of the past despite her hybrid identity; half English and Jamaican. However, diving into the chaotic Jamaican Bowden’s roots through the freezing stories and the photograph of Ambrosia, Irie unmask the buried past of Ambrosia, the mother of Hortense, the grandmother of Clara, and the great-grandmother of Irie, a woman who loses her maidenhood by the English Captain Charlie Durham “one drunken evening in the Bowden larder, May 1906” (356).

Once Ambrosia finds herself pregnant, Durham ensures her that Ambrosia carries “a secret child [who] would be the cleverest Negro boy in Jamaica” and Ambrosia will become “a maid no more” (357). Yet, Ambrosia’s destiny leaves her as a servant with her daughter, Hortense, after the departure of Captain Charlie Durham. The trace of the past and the contamination of the Bowden’s blood become a “family memory; an unforgotten trace the Bowdens” (356). Thus, the story of her mother, Ambrosia, settles Hortense’s mind and entraps her mild feelings against the white Englishman. Hortense, as a mixed-race woman fears repeating the initial trauma of Bowdens with Clara’s marriage to the White Englishman. As Beatriz Pérez Zapata, who focuses on the transgenerational transmission of the female Bowden characters’ traumas in her work, *Zadie Smith and Postcolonial Trauma: Decolonising Trauma, Decolonising Selves* argues Archie is the reminder of Ambrosia’s trauma:

Indeed, her relationship to Archie will sever the ties with her family because Hortense rejects him on account of his race: he is a reminder of a trace of bad blood that she has fought to eliminate. (2021: 56)

Therefore, her mother’s traumatic experience after the departure of her father, Durham by leaving his ashes behind mirrors Hortense’s fears of Clara’s experience of the trauma of Ambrosia with her marriage to Archie. However, her love for her granddaughter, Irie overcomes her fears since she claims that Irie’s existence is the only good thing that comes from this couple just like her existence from Ambrosia and Durham. However, Irie as the new generation of Bowdens wipes the stereotypical racial ideology by unleashing her heterogeneous cultural identity to the next generation. Unlike Hortense, Irie is the present face of heterogeneous cultural hybridity and sheds light on the transition of cultural replacement between the past and the present through the powerful promise given by the marriage rather than itching colonial coercion. Hortense as a hybrid woman with her multiple racial heritages, merges cultural and racial differences between Bowdens and Durhams, as Lamia Tayeb states:

Not a public marriage alliance in the traditional sense, the union of Captain Durham and Ambrosia Bowden is figured in terms of a transfer of substance between racially different bodies coupled with the transfer of a culture, the religious culture of Jehovah’s Witnesses; cross-racial impregnation. (2021: 96)

Even though their relationship is not based on cultural practice, the mix of them is still able to produce their cultural transfer through their daughter, Hortense to the next generation as well. It is possible to understand that heterogeneity cannot be limited. Thereby, it battles against the limitations of homogeneity even in the absence of cultural practices and vows. Therefore, Irie becomes the extension of Hortense through the cultural and public marriage between Jamaican Clara and English Archie. As Laura Moss in her work *The Political of Everyday Hybridity* emphasizes the process of change from Hortense to Irie as: “the parallel stories, generations apart, illustrate the shift from a forced hybridity in Jamaica to a chosen hybridity in England” (2003: 13). Thus, the interracial marriage between Archibald and Clara may not erase the unforgotten trace of suffering in the matrilineal line of Bowdens but takes the place of outdated coercion within the existence of the granddaughter, Irie.

Regarding the cultural transfer, *White Teeth* introduces the Iqbals family through the friendship between Archibald Jones and Samad Iqbal, which is based on the Second World War. The friendship between Archie and Samad sets a bridge for transferring cultural differences of Bangladeshi Iqbals and Jamaican-English Jones families to each other. Thereby, fighting for the sake of England as British soldiers concrete their friendship and create a sense of togetherness despite their differences. On the other hand, Samad’s two fingers being injured in the war causes him to be a veteran. His hand becomes a constant reminder of his personal sacrifice for the victory of England in WWII, also reflects the sacrifice of leaving his homeland, Bangladesh, to pursue a better life in England. So, his sacrifice for the victory of England on the battleground reveals his contribution to the British Force and disrupts the homogeneous one-sided white British success, which also justifies the rights of heterogeneous cultures on British soil. However, the postcolonial past and Samad’s in-betweenness become the seed of his split cultural understanding as the lack of his sense of belonging in the host country since he remains between two nations and cultures after WWII. As Samad states:

I’m fit for nothing now, not even Allah, who is all powerful in his mercy. What am I going to do, after this war is over, this war that is already over what am I going to do? Go back to Bengal? Or to Delhi? Who would have such an Englishman there? To England? Who would have such an Indian?

They promise us independence in exchange for the men we were. But it is a devilish deal. What should I do? (112)

The lamentation emphasizes how Samad experiences a sense of (un)belonging after WWII. As he internalizes the national culture strictly, he encounters the inability to decide where to go after serving the British army in WWII. However, his decision to migrate to England heats up the complexities of his cultural identity and his efforts for his family's cultural preservation in England, as the following section explores further. What is striking is that Samad believes that moving to England corrupts the purity of his and his family members' sacred cultural beliefs because of the cultural changes in his family members. He eventually disassociates himself from English culture by turning to his Bangladeshi familial past and stories.

Moving on now to consider Samad's Bangladeshi cultural pride, the lineage of Iqbals plays a significant role in clinging to his roots through the memory of his great-grandfather, Mangal Pande. Pande, as an Indian mutiny who revolts against British rule in India in contrast to Samad, who fights on behalf of England, not only becomes a heroic figure but also a powerful reference to Samad's diasporic existence in London. In this respect, Pande's resistance against oppression for the sake of Indian Independence reflects Samad's national pride on British soil. Therefore, every time Samad invokes the ancient fossils of the Iqbals, he reminisces about the significance of his bloodlines to others. As Astrid Erll states that: reminiscing the memory of Pande as "the first to rise up against the British" despite the failure of Pande's rebellion in the face of Englishness becomes the contribution to Samad's existence in England (2006: 177). However, Samad's obsession with the past legacy of Mangal Pande becomes a "repetitive syndrome" that Samad constantly circles around Pande's rebellion and courage by associating it with his portrayal in England. (185). In addition to Samad's portrayal, Ashley Dawson in her work, *Genetics, Biotechnology, and the Future of "Race" in Zadie Smith's White Teeth*, observes the cultural memory of Pande as "a paradigm of cultural nationalist resistance to the colonial destruction of tradition" (2007: 161). Thus, Pande's story surrounds his mind whenever he attempts to transgress the borders of Bengali and Muslim principles. Samad with the Bengali and Muslim identity is "the foreign man in a foreign land caught between borders" and frequently draws attention to his cultural representation in England (178). The imprisonment of the past haunts him and blocks

him from building a powerful bond with the English culture in London. It is possible to understand that Samad gets drowned by the anxiety of losing his Bangladeshi Muslim cultural roots and his inability to transfer them to the next generations. In this vein, Astrid Erll points out the story of Pande remarks on “the impact of cultural memory on present-day societies” as Samad, later on, determines sending his son, Magid from England to Bangladesh for the sake of cultural refreshment against the Western corruption (2006: 177). On the question of Samad’s cultural representation in England, his arranged marriage with a young Bangladeshi woman, Alsana Begum, by the decision of the elders of their family, represents the traditional practice. Despite their turbulent marriage and age difference, they successfully maintain their marriage, and have twins, Magid Mahfooz Murshed and Mubtasim Iqbal and Millat Zulfikar Iqbal. The names of the twins chosen by Alsana and Samad bear cultural and religious forms since the names of twins begin with the letter ‘M’ as a possible reference to Prophet Muhammed, on the other hand, Zulfikar, as the middle name of Millat is a reference to the fourth caliph, Ali’s sword in Islamic religion. Throughout these wrapped Bengali and Islamic cultural references, the Iqbal family creates a world where they purge their sense of (un)belonging on British soil even though the names of the twins do not specifically carry meaning for English society. The twins are not Bengali born with Islamic culture as they do not share the same passion with the parents for their father’s cultural and religious roots. Thereby, Magid rejects his cultural name given by his parents and declares himself as English when “a few months earlier, on Magid’s ninth birthday, a group of very nice-looking white boys with meticulous manners had turned up on the doorstep and asked for Mark Smith” (151). Even though his father is obsessed with the glorious name of Magid, Magid desires to mimic Englishness by changing his name and then starting to refer to her mother from the Bengali cultural form, “amma” to the English form “mum” (151). Thus, the inability to escape from his father’s cultural expectations drags him to reconstruct his cultural identity by dreaming of becoming someone else as the novel recounts Magid’s heartfelt expressions:

But this was just a symptom of a far deeper malaise. Magid really wanted to be in some other family. He wanted to own cats and not cockroaches, he wanted his mother to make the music of the cello, not the sound of the sewing machine; he wanted to have a trellis of flowers growing up one side of the

house instead of the ever growing pile of other people's rubbish; he wanted a piano in the hallway in place of the broken door off cousin Kurshed's car; he wanted to go on biking holidays to France, not day-trips to Blackpool to visit aunties; he wanted the floor of his room to be shiny wood, not the orange and green swirled carpet left over from the restaurant; he wanted his father to be a doctor, not a one-handed waiter; and this month Magid had converted all these desires into a wish to join in with the Harvest Festival like Mark Smith would. Like everybody else would. (151)

However, his desire to transform his cultural identity into English culture enrages the father, who strictly craves for him to become “a real Bengali, a proper Muslim” (215). Another example of Magid's rebellion against his inherited culture is Magid's willingness to celebrate the Harvest Festival. His protest against his father's constraints about the celebration of the festival triggers Samad's anger. Samad persistently states that: “I don't want you participating in that nonsense. It has nothing to do with us, Magid. Why are you always trying to be somebody you are not?” (150). Thereby, Magid's rejection of Bangladeshi cultural roots despite the imposition of Samad remarks the concept of assimilation to the front in the novel since the gleams of becoming Westernized begin with the disconnection to the Bangladeshi and Islamic cultural roots. In this respect, Magid's adaptation to English culture liberates him even though his father perceives it as a Western invasion.

Regarding the clash of differences, the parent-teacher meeting plays a significant role in the emergence of cultural integration and cultural conflicts with the participation of the diverse community in a platform. The disagreement between Samad and the school headmistress, Mrs. Owens, about the celebration of the Harvest Festival reflects Samad's unstoppable temper against his sons' participation in Western cultural practices. He believes taking part in the Christian festivals transgresses the Bangladeshi and Islamic beliefs of Magid and Millat. However, the school headmistress emphasizes that the school curriculum gives place to diverse cultural and religious beliefs as she states:

Mr. Iqbal, we have been through the matter of religious festivals quite thoroughly in the autumn review. As I am sure you are aware, the school already recognizes a great variety of religious and secular events: amongst them, Christmas, Ramadan, Chinese New Year, Diwali, Yom Kippur,

Hanukkah, the birthday of Haile Selassie, and the death of Martin Luther King. The Harvest Festival is part of the school's ongoing commitment to religious diversity, Mr. Iqbal. (129)

Even though these cultural and religious festivals might be possible growth of the perspectives of the children, Samad is anxious about the influence of Western cultures on Millat and Magid. It is possible to understand that the source of his incessant temper stems from a sense of fear for the erasure of his Bangladeshi and Muslim faith, as he labels most of the festivals counted by the headmistress as "pagan" (129). While the conflict between the headmistress and Samad about the festivals in the school curriculum shows Samad's resistance to the influence of Western culture on the twins, it also explicitly shows his anxiety about the changes in his sons. Unlike Samad, Alsana seems to be happy for his sons to celebrate the Harvest Festival and integrate with diverse cultural practices despite her husband's request for the removal of the Harvest Festival from the school curriculum. Therefore, Alsana, as a woman, reflects her optimistic approach to the seed of heterogeneous cultures in London and the integration of her twins with the other cultures. However, Samad enforces Alsana voting for the removal of the festival, as the tension emerges between the couple:

Samad pressed Alsana's hand. She kicked him in the ankle. He stamped on her toe. She pinched his flank. He bent back her little finger and she grudgingly raised her right arm while deftly elbowing him in the crotch with her left. (130)

Alsana's reaction against her husband extinguishes the stereotypical cultural dynamic and markers of domination between husband and wife, although the other parents underestimate her status as a Muslim woman by a glance: "Janice and Ellen looked over to her with the piteous, saddened smiles they reserved for subjugated Muslim women" (130-131). However, Alsana does not hesitate to struggle against his husband's enforcement on behalf of his offer by aggressively reflecting her attitude toward Samad on this platform. Alsana's intention exposes her inner sense, which defies the concept of homogeneous cultures and burns down the submissive woman image in spite of her reluctant vote on behalf of his husband. In addition to this disagreement between the wife and husband, Samad complains about the lifestyle of Alsana's sisters and raises questions on the concept of cultural assimilation and

corruption and, as Samad states:

They won't go to mosque, they don't pray, they speak strangely, they dress strangely, they eat all kinds of rubbish, they have intercourse with God knows who. No respect for tradition. People call it assimilation when it is nothing but corruption. Corruption! (190)

This discussion between Samad and Alsana is a good illustration of Samad's understanding of assimilation since Samad presumes assimilation corrupts the purity of cultures. It is possible to understand that the lifestyle of Alsana's sisters and nephews turns into a kind of cultural threat in the face of Iqbals. Guarding his Bengali and Muslim culture against the transmission of other cultures and capturing the sacred harmony of the past unconceals Samad's understanding of cultural corruption. However, Alsana's search on the ethnic origin of the Bengalis in the Reader's Digest Encyclopedia distorts Samad's fixation on cultural homogeneity as Alsana discovers that:

Oi, mister! Indo-Aryans... it looks like I am Western after all! Maybe I should listen to Tina Turner, wear the itsy-bitsy leather skirts. Pah. It just goes to show,' said Alsana, revealing her English tongue, 'you go back and back and back and it's still easier to find the correct Hoover bag than to find one pure person, one pure faith, on the globe. Do you think anybody is English? Really English? It's a fairy-tale! (236)

Digging into the ethnic origins of Bengalis winds the ethnicities to each other and deconstructs the understanding of homogeneous cultures. Alsana remarks that cultural homogeneity is impossible since cultures influence other cultures and shape cultural hybridity through interactions. Thus, transmitting cultural heterogeneity through generations takes the place of the stability of cultural homogeneity.

As discussed above, the values of Bengali and Muslim culture are at the center of Samad's life. However, his life in England, with his half immersion to the Western world, reveals how he internally struggles with his repressed sexual desires in London. Even though he is culturally and religiously adamant about his origin, his involvement with the Western world transgresses his conservative culture, which he has acquired from his upbringing, and liberates him. In this respect, England awakens his repressed sexual desires by suppressing his conservative Bengali

Muslim culture. For instance, the inability to sexually integrate with his wife Alsana drags him to masturbate for momentary satisfaction as a means of violating his cultural and religious beliefs. In addition to the momentary satisfaction, Ashley Dawson states that “this feeling of contamination by the West worsens” when Samad starts to have a sexual affair with the English, Poppy Burth-Jones, the music teacher of the twins, “whose double-barreled name succinctly communicates her exemplary Englishness” (2007: 160-161). Betraying his wife by releasing his sexual desires expands the actual corruption yet he eventually feels a sense of guilt. As Katina Rogers states: the music teacher, Poppy Burt Jones: “herself serves as a homogenizing force” which awakens the ultimate sense of corruption against his ancestor’s memory in Samad’s mind (2008: 51). Consequently, the corruption parodies his devotion to the sacred religion and cultural belief as he starts to question: “how can I show them the straight road when I have lost my own bearings?” (189). While he propagates his cultural beliefs to others, his inability to repress his sexual desires against the twins’ music teacher exhibits pure hypocrisy.

The twins, as the next generation of the Iqbals, are not intended to be shaped by the father’s Eastern and Islamic cultural expectations, in contrast, they exhibit Western traits with the duality of being both Bangladeshi and British. However, the father asserts adapting Western culture is a risk that can corrupt the sacred Bangladeshi and Islamic culture and regards the Western cultural norms as a threat. As Phillip Tew remarks that:

although Samad mourns the loss of his original culture and home from exile, one senses that he enjoys his dissatisfactions, creating the monstrous schism in his family as a result, alienating his wife until the return of Magid, but dividing his sons in perpetuity. (2003: 64)

Even though he intends to save his family from his understanding of cultural corruption, he pushes them to the edge of a cliff that causes the fragmentations of Iqbals. His initial quest undertakes the role of becoming the savior of the twins’ souls by peeling the Western traits from their hearts. However, his limited financial source for airfare forces him to choose one of his little sons to resurrect his Eastern Islamic cultural roots by returning to the roots. While the choice of sending one of them to the Bangladeshi roots saves the chosen son’s soul from Western corruption in the eyes of the father, the one who remains in England is expelled from the realm of the

father's paradise and eternally stained as corrupted. Thus, the division of the twins which also mirrors Samad's inner duality creates a gap between the brothers and creates a sense of exile and adventure. The adjustment of a new life in Bangladesh might seem an adventure for Millat, who is abandoned in England, whereas, the other one, Magid, who moves away from his home country to Bangladesh, eventually experiences the adventure in sight as an exile. The expulsion from the realm of paradise creates a sense of resentment, which also triggers Millat's rebellion against the cultural image that the father designs for the Iqbal twins. As Kathleen Vickers reveals, the consequence of Samad's moral choice is chaotic since Millat feels "inferior and unworthy of a return to the site of his Indo-Bangladeshi heritage" (2009: 71). The father sews a robe as the cultural fate, which shapes Millat as a violent fundamentalist in England and Magid as the embodiment of Englishness. It is possible to understand that playing with the fate of children and polarizing the twins to the West and East backfires the father's cultural expectations. Magid blocks the leak of Bangladeshi Islamic cultures into his nature, since he studies law rather than religion and then ultimately becomes "more English than the English" instead of a great holy man in the words of Samad (406). Magid's return to England, specifically the Chalfen's residence with the help of Marcus Chalfen brings him together with his childhood dreams of owning a unique English family with splendid Westernized values. Besides, Marcus and Magid work on the FutureMouse© project, which contains a genetic designation to "eliminate the random" and prevent health issues as a kind of remedy for cancer by manipulating genetics for the future (350). However, after encountering Magid's transformation, Samad claims that "this is some clone, this is not an Iqbal" (424). The transformation of Magid can be considered as one of the examples of assimilation as he turns his back on his inherited culture from his father and shapes himself in the form of Englishness. Magid's cultural identity is not only formed by his desire to transform into an Englishman but more as revenge that he feeds against his father. For instance, there is not a moment of hesitation to break his inherited religious belief and turns himself into a kaffir, a non-believer in his friend, Mickey's place, O'Connell's Pool House that he orders "a juicy, yet well-done, tomato ketchup-ed bacon sandwich" (450). Magid overturns his inherited cultural and religious values by violating the sacred values of Islam. Thus, the transformation of Magid despite his refreshment in Bangladesh prevails his father's enforcement of being a proper Muslim and liberates

himself from the imposition of his father.

On the other hand, Millat, the son who remained one step behind, is not the favorite of the father. The emergence of a complex relationship between the father and the son drags the son to the stage where he can demonstrate his rebellious nature against his father's traditional expectations. Millat "was neither one thing nor the other, this or that, Muslim or Christian, Englishman or Bengali; he lived for the in between, he lived up to his middle name, Zulfikar, the dashing of two sword" (351). Millat's position as an inbetweeners winks the disconnection from the inherited cultural and religious values since he adores Western popular culture and shares a passion for becoming a rock performer like Bruce Springsteen throughout his childhood. Hence, his immersion into Western popular culture through; Scarface, The Godfather, and Goodfellas first shapes his masculine traits and eventually his identity in the face of English society. In addition to this, Jennifer Gustar remarks on the rebellious nature of Millat as "not natural, not genetic, nor Islamic; it is learned from constructions of heroic masculinity in Western popular culture" (2010: 341). The charismatic sides of the rebellious actors that he idolizes in these movies enchant Millat and turns into the light that he holds into his identity. The turning point of Millat's cultural life is the penalty of smoking weed in the school which renders him temporarily living with the Chalfens under the name of tutoring as a modern version of colonization. The penalty crosses the paths of the Chalfens, the Jones, and the Iqbals in the Chalfens residence, where the second-generation; Millat, Irie, and Joshua exchange their cultural differences. The Chalfens family is described as "clones of each other, their dinner table was an exercise in mirrored perfection, Chalfenism and all its principles reflecting itself infinitely" (314). Thus, the principles of Chalfens and their perfect and superior lifestyle veils Jones and Iqbal's understanding of the values of family. However, the parents of the second generation are still trapped by the lingering racial ideology because they still perpetuate the racial tension in a modern way. In this respect, Joyce Chalfen ties the Chalfens' academic success and intellectuality with their unique genes as the Chalfens do not hesitate to reflect the superiority of their homogeneous exclusive culture:

The Chalfens had no friends. They interacted mainly with the Chalfen extended family (the good genes which were so often referred to: two scientists, one mathematician, three psychiatrists and a young cousin working

for the Labour Party). (314)

The Chalfens with their distinctive cultural and educational backgrounds prevail in the minds of Irie and Millat as they start to question their familial background. For example, Joyce openly points out an article about Muslim boys and girls and as she says: Millat “should be thankful he’s not a girl... Unbelievable what they do to the girls” (327). Joyce implies the religious borders and discrimination between Muslim female and male genders. As Sylvia Hadjetian states that the Chalfens a white middle class with academic success “behaves like colonisers with their arrogance and intolerance” (2014: 9). However, despite the Chalfens and their exclusive lifestyle with the combination of their principles, ‘Chalfenism’ embodies the pure Englishness which Zadie Smith ironically disrupts with their migrant past as Polish. Another significant aspect of assimilation, Joyce Chalfen with her paternalistic feelings embraces a kind of quest that she can save Millat and Irie from their heterogeneous cultures and identities. Thus, the primary role of Joyce as horticulturalist becomes a missionary to recover Irie and Millat’s heterogeneous cultures just like she thrives plants in her garden as Matt Thomas states that:

Her garden is an allegory for the world: flowers and plants represent certain people, bugs represent certain evils, and Joyce and her cultural values are what allow the garden to thrive. Irie and Millat become two of Joyce’s plants, and she sees them as being eaten from the inside out by their cultural heritage just as thrips (a bug that nests within certain plants) do to gardens. (2009: 19)

In this regard, Joyce mocks the other cultures with her sense of humor and reflects them as insignificant. Therefore, Joyce boosts the concept of cultural assimilation and blows out the existence of heterogeneous cultures, just like she prunes her plants in her natural world. In contrast to Irie, who feels like “wearing somebody else’s uniform or somebody else’s skin” in the Chalfens residence, Millat rejects the influences of the Chalfens and assimilation on his identity and lands a punch through his striking change (328). Millat with his dual cultural identity as Bangladeshi and British experiences a sense of alienation from the Western culture since the cultural and racial prejudice become more tangible on the borders of the Chalfens. His relationship with Joyce Chalfen is the primary factor that causes Millat to seek a new environment when he is aware that his position is not more than a plant to be thrived as a cultural reconstruction in the eyes of Joyce. Thus, the position of in-betweenness

as being British-born with Bangladeshi roots causes Millat to experience a sense of (un)belonging, which eventually drags him to be a part of a religious fundamentalist involvement, KEVIN (The Keepers of the Eternal and Victorious Islamic Nation). KEVIN, as a powerful Islamic fundamentalist organization, stands up to the infiltration of Western cultures into traditional Islamic values. Therefore, KEVIN is the address where Millat finds a sense of belonging in England. Becoming a member of KEVIN allows him to purify himself from a sense of alienation and gain recognition in the face of English society. The FutureMouse© project, worked by Marcus Chalfen and Magid, becomes the initial target of this radical group since the project stains their ethical and mostly religious understanding. On the other hand, the youth flame blazes in Millat render him a womanizer with his masculine fierce attraction in England. His active sexual life is always in the foreground as he even cheats on his girlfriend, Karina Cain, whom Millat considers “Karina Cain was different. It wasn’t just sex with Karina Cain” (369). The relationship between Millat and Karina as the narrator states:

He liked her and she liked him, and she had a great sense of humour, which felt like a miracle, and she looked after him when he was down and he looked after her too, in his own way, bringing her flowers and stuff. (369)

However, Millat’s involvement in KEVIN starts to shake his feelings toward Karina since Karina’s Western style with her sexual outfits categorizes her according to the title of the leaflet which is given by KEVIN members, Hifan and Tyrone: “Who is truly free! The Sisters of KEVIN or the Sisters of Soho” in Millat’s mind. Ultimately, stepping towards this radical establishment to gain a sense of belonging changes his thoughts on her as he believes that she is “prostituting herself to the male gaze. Particularly white males” (372). Thus, Millat, who struggles with his self-image grows up with the insertion of Western popular culture and dreams of being a gangster yet eventually turns into a fundamentalist and feels a sense of belonging in KEVIN.

On the other hand, Irie, with the mixed British and Jamaican heritages in England, struggles with her self-image. It is possible to understand that the characters from the second generation internalize racial categorization, although the hegemonic racial categorization becomes a myth that the second generation has defeated. After Irie’s involvement in the Chalfens, her enchantment with the Chalfens’ intellectual

lifestyle brings about her assimilation tendencies. According to Irie, the Chalfens is the embodiment of Englishness, and she “wanted to merge with Chalfens, to be one flesh” for her self-image in the face of Englishness (284). Her bond with the Chalfens is the only way to taste its perfection on the road of Englishness to surround the mind of Millat. Therefore, her desire to attract Millat becomes her primary quest in the novel. However, Irie’s physical appearance, and her body shape are transmitted by her Jamaican heritage, even though her father, Archie expects the transmission of English heritage with the “blue eyes! Miracle of nature!” (69). Reducing her body shape with corsets and makeup with light colors point out her desire for European female beauty to allure Millat, who mostly desires English girls. Therefore, Irie wants to transform herself into what Millat desires most. However, her transformation by straightening her afro hair at the hairdresser ends up losing them. Her efforts to lift the barriers to reaching European female beauty standards render her losing touch with her roots. Besides, the categorization of beauty according to Irie is quite conflictual, as she unconsciously reveals her understanding of beauty through her interpretation of Shakespearean sonnet 130, “The Dark Lady” in her English class. Her question about the Dark Lady brings about her categorization of beauty as she asks the complexion of the Dark Lady to her teacher:

‘Is she black?’

‘Is who black?’ ‘The dark lady.’

‘No, dear, she’s dark. She’s not black in the modern sense. There weren’t any . . . well, Afro-Carri-bee-yans in England at that time, dear. That’s more a modern phenomenon, as I’m sure you know. But this was the 1600s. I mean I can’t be sure, but it does seem terribly unlikely, unless she was a slave of some kind, and he’s unlikely to have written a series of sonnets to a lord and then a slave, is he?’ (275)

The description of love for the lady’s unconventional beauty brings about complex questions in the mind of Irie since she interprets the lady as black and exotic. While the historical explanation granted by the teacher brings light into the interpretation and the significance of the historical background of the era for the interpretation, it also reveals Irie’s categorization of beauty with the association of racial heritages. It is possible to understand that she also underestimates her Jamaican beauty and desires to transform herself from a “Jamaican hourglass” to an “English Rose”

(266-267). The sense of insecurity with her Jamaican physical appearance puts her in need of self-acceptance as the narrator states: “There was England, a gigantic mirror, and there was Irie, without reflection. A stranger in a stranger land” (266). The desire for self-acceptance frustrates her and eventually drags her to having successfully sex with first Millat and then Magid on the same day. As a result of this, her realization of her pregnancy triggers questions regarding the biological father of the baby. As Mindi McMann, in his work, *British Black Box: A Return to Race and Science in Zadie Smith’s ‘White Teeth’* states: “It will be a new kind of hybrid child whose history will defy science by not being traceable, but at the same time, will likely never escape its roots” (2012: 633). Thus, the lack of scientific methods to determine the biological father through genes raises questions regarding cultural and racial roots. As Irie starts to consider the biological father of the baby:

Same thick black hair. Same twinkling eyes. Same habit of chewing the tops of pens. Same shoe size. Same deoxyribonucleic acid. She could not know her body’s decision, what choice it had made, in the race to the gamete, between the saved and the unsaved. She could not know if the choice would make any difference. Because whichever brother it was, it was the other one too. She would never know. (515)

Thus, the twins are super clones of each other except for the cultural and religious beliefs that they created themselves. Therefore, the existence of the baby disrupts the fixation and certainty of roots and deconstructs the importance of cultural and racial categorizations. As Barbara Korte states the significance of the ethnicity of the baby as “this third generation, with genes that are white, black and Asian, will take the ethnic hybridisation of Britain even further” (2009: 235). On the other hand, Irie’s decision to raise the baby with Joshua Chalfen breaks down the white middle-class Chalfen's principles and their unique family line. The mixed-race baby as the future face of the heterogeneous cultures intertwines these three families with each other.

It requires her to go back, back, back to the root, to the fundamental moment when sperm met egg, when egg met sperm so early in this history it cannot be traced. Irie’s child can never be mapped exactly nor spoken of with any certainty. Some secrets are permanent. In a vision, Me has seen a time, a time not far from now, when roots won’t matter any more because they can’t because they mustn’t because they’re too long and they’re too tortuous and

they're just buried too damn deep. (527)

The impossibility of mapping the baby's biological father with an accurate prediction turns the baby's roots upside down. Even though the future is hidden by the uncertainty of the baby's father, fathering the baby by Joshua Chalfen extends the cultural combinations as Jamaican, British, Bangladeshi, and even Polish. The significance of the origin and heritage has been violated with the baby as the representation of the third generation. Thus, the baby is a glimpse of a heterogeneous cultural identity with indeterminate genetics that offers a borderless future through the transmission of heterogeneous cultures to the generations in the new millennium.

Consequently, Smith opens a layer in which the cultures first clash and then transfer their differences to future generations through interracial marriages and postcolonial migrations in *White Teeth*. Therefore, the concept of multiculturalism takes place in the trace of the past with the integration of cultural differences of the characters in London. Even though the first-generation characters are still imprisoned by the cultural and racial ideology, the second-generation overcomes the significance of the hegemonic cultural and racial understanding with the birth of Irie's baby. So, starting with Ambrosia's colonial past and then maintaining Irie as the present face of heterogeneous cultural identities, the novel in the end reveals the future face of heterogeneity with the existence of Irie's unnamed baby. Smith's perfect ending with the convergence of three families foreshadows the ambiguity of roots. Therefore, the ethnic roots and cultural roots lose their meaning with the existence of Irie's baby since the baby's biological father even scientifically cannot be determined and remains hidden forever.

IV. CONCLUSION

Contemporary writers reflect on many cultural issues to uncover problems of identity and sense of belonging. The Commonwealth migration from the former colonies to the mother country, England, became one of the cultural issues in England. Even though many immigrants immigrated to England, assuming that it was a dream country where they could achieve their dreams, the post-war social reality and racial ideology in London crack their dreams and trigger a sense of disappointment.

Caribbean British women writers: Andrea Levy and Zadie Smith effectively tackle this cultural issue and the justification of their belonging to England in their literary works, as they cross the boundaries of homogeneous cultures and identities within the hybrid cultures and identities in their literary works. Concerning the justification of belonging, both Levy and Smith remark on the forgotten role of many soldiers from the colonies in the service of the British Army during the Second World War. Reminding this historical moment creates a sense of togetherness and unity since many soldiers are united under one flag on British soil. In this regard, this thesis has explained the significance of the forgotten role for the sake of the mother country and the justification for the birth of heterogeneous cultures and identities in England. Both Levy's *Small Island* and Smith's *White Teeth* conclude with a mixed-race baby as the mirror of a multicultural London in the future. The mixed-race baby symbolizes the mix of cultural and ethnic differences in a body for the future of multicultural London. The mixed-race babies in both *White Teeth* and *Small Island* as a glimpse of heterogeneous cultures and identities that mirror the multicultural future in London. Smith and Levy use the hybrid identity that mixes cultural and racial differences and challenges homogeneous monolithic cultures and identities. Thus, the emergence of hybrid cultures and identities not only takes the place of homogeneous cultures and identities through multicultural and multiracial relations but also represents a new wave of a multicultural future in London.

Although Smith's *White Teeth* and Levy's *Small Island*, at first glance, reveal misunderstandings and prejudices in these relations arising from cultural and racial stereotypes, both novels laid the foundation of a new sense of understanding over time. While female characters seem more adaptable to a multicultural place, male characters cannot reconcile their monolithic, homogeneous cultures with others. However, even though female characters do not overcome stereotypical rotten formats of history, they prevail over the obstacles on the path of the concept of multiculturalism through their tacit understanding and empathy. Queenie Bligh, Hortense Joseph, and Alsana Iqbal's understanding of multiculturalism unleashes a more comprehensive and optimistic perception in contrast to the male characters. As Hortense is the one who convinces her husband to take the baby with them before leaving Bligh's residence, she creates a peaceful home for Queenie's mixed-race baby in *Small Island*. Hortense's acceptance of mothering Queenie's mixed-race baby also echoes the cross-racial sisterhood, which remarks on the significance of the connection between female characters against the racial ideology of a multicultural world. On the other hand, Alsana Iqbal, in *White Teeth*, is aware that England provides a better opportunity for her children, whereas her husband, Samad Iqbal fears the influence of the Western culture on his children. One of the prominent examples is the conflict between Alsana and Samad at the school meeting, which draws attention to the clues of Alsana's belief that celebrations based on cultural events can broaden Magid and Millat's horizons. However, Samad Iqbal insists on the removal of the Harvest Festival as he believes that it is nothing more than Western corruption. Even though Samad forces Alsana to vote on behalf of himself, this conflict remarks on Alsana's perception of a multicultural world. Therefore, while male characters intend to prevent the spark of multiculturalism, the female characters in both novels are more open to spreading cultural diversity.

On the question of the comparison of generations, these two novels in this thesis provide a continuation of each other to reflect the deep transformation of ideological changes in the first- and second-generation. In this regard, while Levy's *Small Island* mostly focuses on the first generation, Smith's *White Teeth* exposes the portrayal of cultural and racial conflicts in the first generation and second generation. In *Small Island*, the stereotypical representation of otherness is explored by the first generation at the British Empire Exhibition. The prologue by Queenie's retrospection

seizes the influence of the past on the present since it anchors a deeper meaning by drawing the frame of historical encounters of differences. In Queenie's retrospection, she recalls the flaws of many individuals who consider differences as signs of savagery or non-human including herself in the prologue. The prologue not only provides a transition for a new sense of understanding through Queenie's retrospection but also the prologue unfolds how the cultural and racial stereotypes preserve their domination in the minds of the first generation. On the other hand, *White Teeth* remarks on the first generation's obsession with racial and cultural roots and lineages. For instance, Samad Iqbal, who is enchanted by the legacy of his grandfather, Mangal Pande, keeps telling his children about the supremacy of their lineage. Samad's strong feelings toward his ancestors and roots cause him to send his son, Magid, to his homeland, Bangladesh, for a cultural and religious cleansing. However, this enforcement problematizes the construction of a multicultural world and the relationship between the first- and second generations. The first generation intends to impose its cultural heritage on the second generation as if it descends from the sky down to the ground. Therefore, the second generation seems to universalize the cultural and racial formats that they have learned from the first generation. However, these rotten cultural and racial stereotypes through the imposition of first-generation become a myth that the second generation universalizes and feeds their prejudices against cultural and racial differences. So, this internalization resides in the minds of the second generation and triggers a sense of (un)belonging even though they were born in England and injected by Western culture. For example, Irie Jones in *White Teeth* struggles with her racial and cultural heritage and sets on a journey to discover her roots by visiting her grandmother, Hortense Bowden. Irie's journey to her roots, in Jamaica bridges her unknown matrilineal past with herself. However, this journey does not allow her to compromise her ideas about belonging and identity. Jamaica does not provide a sense of belonging that she could not gain in England throughout her life as well. This confrontation remarks on the complex relationship between identity and belonging for the second generation since she could not fill that emptiness opened by a lack of sense of belonging in England. The first generation pushes the second generation into a stage where the second generation starts to question their racial and cultural heritages. Thus, the second generation seems to universalize what they have heard about themselves. Millat also could not reconcile his sense of belonging with his identity. He eventually finds

himself on a quest for a search of a sense of belonging and identity. In this respect, KEVIN, a fundamentalist group, offers him a sense of community that he has not gained in English society. However, Millat's relationship with KEVIN also unveils the contradictions regarding the principles of KEVIN with his lifestyle since he is not a strict religious believer in Islam. His lifestyle; drinking alcohol, smoking, and having sex with many women out of marriage undermines the principles of Islam. His complex relationship with KEVIN brings about a sense of alienation and disconnection from his true identity as well. Therefore, the imposition of the cultural and racial heritage of the first generation within their understanding of racial and cultural stereotypes puts the second generation in a complex situation in which they universalize the stereotypical rotten cultural and racial format of the past, even though this format is not more than a myth.

Regarding the birth of heterogeneous cultures and identities, *Small Island* introduces the second generation through Queenie's mixed-race baby, Michael. While Queenie's baby represents the future of heterogeneous cultures and identities in London, the baby also unfolds the impacts of racial ideology on the white population. Queenie's connection to Queen Victoria, the head of the British Empire, unveils the significance of motherhood. However, Queenie's inability to mother her own baby undermines the essential principles of Victorian motherhood. Therefore, the mother figures in both novels carry a significant role as the female characters are more inclined to build a multicultural world. For instance, Alsana's portrayal in *White Teeth* as a mother remarks on her development, which unleashes her efforts for the construction of a multicultural world since she seems more willing for cultural interaction through religious or cultural celebrations at school. Therefore, Alsana, as a mother does not force her children to distance themselves from other cultures, whereas Samad urges them to follow their Bangladeshi cultural roots because of the significance of the roots and religion. However, *White Teeth* introduces the third generation, Irie's daughter with indeterminate genetics which ruins the significance of cultural and racial roots forever.

To conclude, the birth of heterogeneous identities and cultures through multicultural and multiracial relations defeats the monolithic, homogeneous cultures and identities in Levy's *Small Island* and Smith's *White Teeth*. While the mixed-race baby in Levy's *Small Island* remains a powerful symbol for the concept of

multiculturalism, Smith's *White Teeth* extends this powerful symbol further with Irie's baby with indeterminate genetics, which remarks on the insignificant meaning of cultural and ethnic roots. Thus, the second generation disrupts the universalization of stereotypes based on the imposition of the first generation's racial and cultural ideology through the birth of the third generation.

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RESUME

Name Surname : Atakan SUMER

Education

Istanbul Aydin University (2021)

English Language and Literature - Masters Degree Program

Istanbul Aydin University (2020)

English Language and Literature

Departmental Student Representative (2016-2019)

Bishop Grosseteste University, the UK – Erasmus+ Programme (2018)

English Language and Literature