

Significance of Multiculturalism and socio-cultural issues in Zadie Smith's White Teeth

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Abstract

This research article attempts to investigate the central concept of multiculturalism as well as the issues faced by immigrants who do not belong in the country where they reside in Zadie Smith's seminal work, "The White Teeth." The classic novel by Zadie Smith addresses the crucial issue of multiculturalism and the difficulties faced by immigrants who reside in a foreign country and contribute to its multiculturalism. A sort of cultural melting pot, it also covers how the British populace responds and responds to this ever expanding mix of cultures. It follows the lives of three families: the Iqbal, Jones, and Bowden families. Each of the three families has a mix of cultural influences. The novel examines how they repeatedly feel that they are "simply tolerated" in a country that is not their own. It analyzes how the way British people react to them sometimes purposefully, sometimes unknowingly maintains their sense of "not belonging," which keeps growing. This book also explores the desire of people from different immigrant cultures to learn more about their historical origins and the ideas they hold about their ancestors' homelands and progenitors. In order to convince the new people that they are a part of something great, the characters in this piece are continually engaged in the torturous quest of greatness in their roots. Hysterical realism is a literary genre used by Zadie Smith that was initially described by British critic James Wood, a well-known critic of Smith's writing. This writing technique has enabled her to accurately capture the confusion that exists in immigrant brains. Smith did an excellent job of capturing London's multiracial environment. Minority Muslim cultures also struggle to interact with other cultures, including Jamaican, American, Bangladeshi/Bengali, etc., in addition to the mainstream British culture. The main character Shamad, who immigrated, finds himself in a melting pot of numerous ethnicities where there is perpetual racial and cultural conflict. He, like every other character, has a strong feeling that dominion could lead to the eradication of his civilization. It is clear that the small culture in the other country dominates through behavior or language. All of the immigrant characters experience alienation, and as a result, they all react differently, some in a stoic manner and others in a reactionary or aggressive one, like Shamad's son Millat. Zadie Smith has consistently addressed problems relating to immigrants, religion, ethnic identity, etc. The novel's happy ending conveys the idea that despite the many disputes, things will eventually get better as people grow to accept one another's cultures and identities. The majority of academics describe multiculturalism as an interdisciplinary approach. The individuals in the book come from a variety of backgrounds, and as a result, they have varied perspectives. The first immigrant family worries that by assimilating into a diverse community, they risk losing their cultural identity. They made an effort to adapt to the many cultures, but the second generation is also having trouble.

Keywords: Multiculturalism, Zadie Smith, cultural influences, varied perspectives, mainstream British culture

Introduction:

"My dream would be a multicultural society, one that is different and where every man, woman, and kid are treated equally," Nelson Mandela famously remarked. "I want a society in which all races coexist peacefully," Zadie Smith writes in her book "White Teeth," which explores the realities of immigration and multiculturalism. Insofar as London, Britain, where the book is set, her narration suggests that Mandela's goal has not yet been fully realized. With "White Teeth," a book that significantly contributed to her status as the most highly regarded author of the twenty-first century, Zadie Smith has achieved this. Since its publication, it has received numerous prestigious literary honors, including the Betty Trask Award, James Tait Black Memorial Prize, Whitbread Book Award,

Guardian First Book Award, and Commonwealth Writers First Book Award. On October 25, 1975, in Brent, London, England, to a Jamaican mother and an English father, Zadie Smith was born Sadie Adeline Smith. Smith's magnum opus is praised for its main quality in addition to others, i.e. Multiculturalism. But, the phrase "multiculturalism" is just as complicated as how it is used in the novel. The ground reality of a nation like Britain is depicted in Zadie Smith's book, which contrasts with the political leaders' comments that seem to accept any immigrant culture. These remarks aim to win over every segment of their voter base. As reported by The Guardian Four out of ten respondents in the nation agreed with the assertion that "having a wide variety of backgrounds and cultures has damaged British culture," according to a survey. The immigrant characters in the book occasionally experience conflict because of their relationships with persons from different ethnic groups. Despite the fact that the government may forbid discrimination and other similar insulting remarks, immigrants nonetheless experience them, even if they are expressed in an indirect manner. Any immigrant likely migrates to another nation (often a developed nation like Britain or America) in pursuit of a higher quality of living, stability, and economic strength, but not at the expense of sacrificing his or her own identity, respect, and culture. Iqubals, Joneses, Bowdens, and other immigrant characters in the book live like the English but are not the English. They reside in a place that Zadie Smith aptly refers to as "a Nothing space." A fantastic and insightful quote from Smith's book that highlights the The immigrants' condition is perplexing. This quotation, which takes the form of a question, poses the query, "The cricket test, which side do they cheer for?" by Norman Tebbit. Are you still contemplating your past or current situation? Smith's book is significant from the perspective because it reveals the truth to the readers and unearths the Politicians' duplicity is evident in their emphasis on equality of opportunity and cultural variety in their nation, but on the ground, immigrants are still viewed in some circles as being distinct by race and culture, even though direct discussion of this is prohibited. The overall foundation for the inclusion and integration of new immigrant communities into the British national culture and polity was laid forth in a statement made in 1966 by Roy Jenkins, Britain's then Home Secretary, which provides additional detail on this: "Integration is maybe a fairly imprecise word. I do not believe it implies that immigrants are losing their unique national qualities and cultures. I do not believe that this country needs a "melting pot," which would produce a mass of carbon copies of someone's misguided idea of the stereotypical Englishman. I define integration, therefore, as a process of cultural diversity combined with equality of opportunity in a climate of mutual tolerance, rather than as a flattening process of uniformity. If we are to maintain any sort of international reputation for civilized living and social cohesion, we must do the following: They persistently sense that their identity is at peril throughout the entire book. Nonetheless, Zadie Smith continues to discuss how people respond to danger in different ways. According to her, although older people like Shamad do not respond in an aggressive manner, his son Millat does by joining the Islamist organization IRA. the younger generation of immigrants reacts more irrationally than the older generation. Nobody, however, suggests that Smith instantly responds in an offensive manner. While Millat absorbs popular culture and dresses and speaks in a way that is not his, but rather, adapted to blend in with English society, Magid is exposed to Bengali culture. Nonetheless, despite acting like them, he continues to be referred to by others as the "Paki," an outsider who does not belong in Britain. While Magid, Millat, and Irie are riding the bus and Magid pushes the bell too frequently, a frustrated white passenger remarks, "If you ask me, they should all go back to their own...," to the other passengers. Such utterances contribute to the increase in Millat is frustrated inside. Even though racialization shouldn't be associated with multiculturalism, it is. The undercurrent of race that immigrants experience is present in the book. And they respond to this issue in various ways, as seen, for instance, in the case of Shamad Miah Iqubal. One of the main characters in the book is Shamad. He first meets his best friend Archie while fighting alongside England in a battle. Despite being Caucasian, Archie supports and honors Shamad. Shamad, like his sons later, sacrifices everything for England in the war, but he still wrestles with the quandary that every immigrant has: "To which side do I belong? ". Shamad was more devoted to England throughout the war than Archie Jones was to England, which was not his nation or had never accepted him. In the average English street, no one would have recognized him as one of their own. A vein on Shamad's forehead was ferociously trying to break free of his skin. These statements describe the predicament: "He desired to defend a country that was not his and avenge the killing of men who would not have acknowledged him in the civilian street." a conundrum that from the moment an immigrant steps foot in a foreign country, it exists. Zadie Smith is correct to refer to England as a "Nothing Space." This phrase exclusively refers to an immigrant, not the predominant ethnic group. Shamad is once more confronted by the dogmatic immigration debate after learning that the conflict he and Archie are engaged in is over. "What am I going to do after this war, this war that is already done, what am I going to do?" he asks Archie return to Bengal? Who would have an Englishman like him in Delhi? In England? Who would own an Indian like that? It is a question that Shamad, a Muslim immigrant living in Britain, keeps asking. He is frequently referred to as "Sultan" by his allies even while they are at war. He receives a reminder of who he is in some manner or another. Archie Jones, a different character in the book, appreciates him and comprehends his annoyance better than anybody else. He and

Shamad become closer as lifetime friends who respect each other's similarities and differences as well as their distinctions. Smith brings up the topic of immigrant discrimination on the one hand, but she also demonstrates Shamad and Archie's enduring love for one another. She demonstrates how their relationship transcends all forms of prejudice. She has demonstrated that the problems faced by heterogeneous societies like London can only be resolved via friendship. She suggests that people should respect one another's differences in addition to their similarities when forming relationships. To build a really civilized society where everyone is welcome, not merely in political declarations but also in daily life, one should cherish the differences as much as the similarities. People have a history of stereotyping other groups. Archie is also white, and Shamad is aware of this, yet he has no problems with his pal. He actually adores him the most. He frequently thinks of Millat, Magid, and occasionally Irie when he says that he believes that England as a whole has led his children down the wrong path. "I have been corrupted by England, I see it now," he claims, adding that "my children, my wife, they too have been contaminated." Shamad is speaking here.

Since he is too compromised and not faithful to himself in his private life, he believes that his ideal of growing his children to be upright Muslims has now been dashed. He now wants to use his children to make up for his errors. He forbids his kids from taking part in the Harvest Festival. He brings up the issue of why there are more pagan celebrations than Muslims festivals in the meeting. He views this as the tyranny of his culture and religion. "Exactly that is what I want to know." about Harvest Festival? It is what? How come? And why do my kids have to celebrate it? It is a British notion known as "community cohesion," and the Magid, Millat, and Irie school has incorporated the Fall Festival. The principal of the school, Ms. Owens, has also said that by honoring all minor community festivals, the school respects all religions and cultures. Nevertheless, Shamad questions this. Because only one Muslim celebration is featured in the school calendar, he claims that the Muslim minority's culture is under attack. He insists on the equality that, in his perspective, immigrants Muslims are denied in England during Muslim holidays. The term "xenophobia" is defined by Merriam Webster as "fear and loathing of the stranger or foreigners or of anything that is weird or foreign." It is derived from the Greek words "xenos," which means "a guest," and "phobos," which means "thing." It implies that an immigrant or someone from a different culture will always be a visitor or a stranger who should be avoided. His status as a visitor will never change, and he will never be welcomed into the family of Britain. When Alsana, his wife, tells him, "I restrain myself," Shamad is worried about losing his cultural identity in an English-speaking country. I live. He responds to her, "I let live," saying, "It is not a matter of letting others live. It is important to defend one's religion from mistreatment. Alsana, as opposed to Shamad, has a more pragmatic outlook on life. She believes that looking for one's roots is pointless. She thinks the origins are untraceable all the way to the finish. Discussing who is and is not English, in Zadie Smith's opinion, is pointless. She thinks that the identities are too lost or transformed in the world nowadays. You go back and forth, and it's still simpler to locate the right Hoover bag than it is to discover one pure individual, one pure faith, or the entire world. Alsana made this thinking of her evident in her response to Shamad. Do you believe that anyone is English? True English? A fairy story, indeed! Nonetheless, *White Teeth* incorporates a lot of elements from London. However the persistent and prevalent perception of London as a multicultural community, a mixed-race society with a significant sizeable immigrant population. Via the trade in slaves from Africa, the novel also implicitly addresses non-white immigration. Through the personalities of the ethnic group in England, past and present are intricately entwined. According to reports, there was a huge influx of immigrants from former colonies including the Caribbean and the Indian subcontinent after World War II. Britain is no longer solely a place of white people as it once was. The British society is sufficiently multiethnic that Smith employs a standard term for it, "Neutral." But for an immigrant who has left his history behind and moved to a "Neutral place," where everyone is trying to make new history but nevertheless unable to ignore the past, the actual identity problem still exists. This contradictory query is perpetual. Smith makes a very clear and succinct description of the condition of an immigrant. Every day is a great struggle between who they are and who they ought to be, what they were and what they will become, the author claims. Despite being white, Archie Jones never emphasizes the problems of the Identity Crisis and the overpopulation of immigrants in Britain. He had no idea that people of different races could ever limit his chances. He is never depicted as being racist, and his marriage to Clara Bowden is evidence that he does not hold such views and is content with the world as it is. According to Smith, categorizing people's identities is a very recent phenomenon and is completely superfluous. This is demonstrated by the story of Archie getting on the bus, reading his ticket, and reflecting, "Those tickets, the old ones, they didn't tell you where you were going, much less where you came from." Without a doubt, everything had changed. Archie pondered the reason for that. Characters from "*White Teeth*" can be mostly categorized as first-generation immigrants, including the Bowden's and the Iqbal's descendants, as well as the second generation, which includes Millat, Magid, and Irie Jones. The second generation is in a messier situation than their parents. They are born in the "Nothing space," as Smith put it, and require strong parental

direction to discover their true selves, yet their elders are too preoccupied to cope with their own problems or, in other words In terms of assisting them in discovering who they are in the "Nothing Space" that is Britain, words are powerless. The most in need of assistance is Millat Iqbal, yet Shamad has failed as a father. Shamad believes that he is a failure to his children and that moving his family to a distant country was his first mistake. For him, seeking a better life meant sacrificing authenticity and culture. All his life, Millat yearned for the godfather, but all he ever received was Shamad. Shamad signs his name on a wooden bench in the park to indicate that he, too, had left his mark, much like Americans did on the moon and Englishmen did when they named a street in Kerala after their wives. Shamad describes himself as "a faulty, broken, stupid, one handed waiter of a man who had spent eighteen years in a strange land and made no mark than this." Yet, he fails to see that by scraping his name off the wood, it appears that Shamad has also adopted their views on the futility of flying a flag and naming streets. In the book, Smith claims that Zeno's paradox is false, saying that "He desired one, but the world is many." She claims that while equating Zeno's oneness with the world is admirable, the reality is different and that the world is actually divided into an infinite number of families, each of which is rife with disputes and tensions. Alsana Iqbal, a Muslim Bengali, is the complete antithesis of her subservient and devout husband. She is not concerned about culture at all. She is more of a pragmatic mother who wants her sons to have a decent life. But she also deals with the issues. When Millat, who is now a devoted and well-known Assana Begum refuses to meet Joyce Chalfen, who wants to talk to her about her son's troubles, and Islamist group KEVIN refuses to meet their brother, who has a stronger affinity with the Chalfen family and Marcus Chalfen's Future Mouse Project. The Chalfen have altered Magid so drastically that he now behaves completely differently. Here, Alsana also regrets having lost her authentic Magid. She also believes that moving to London in search of a better life has really made things worse. Alsana, who is a mother after all, undoubtedly has the greatest concern for her children. She tells Joyce angrily, "You and your husband have involved Magid in something so opposed to our culture, to our beliefs, that we barely remember him." Nonetheless, she believes that if she can endure the land of natural catastrophes, i.e. If she can survive in Bangladesh, she can live in London. She continues to educate the twins every day survival skills even though she is expecting twins. She despises London anyway since it has wreaked havoc on the lives of her family from both an economic and cultural standpoint. "I came from the land of tea to this godawful country and then I can't buy a nice cup of it," she laments to Joyce Chalfen. This sentence in some way conveys the living circumstances that immigrants must endure in wealthy nations. In contrast to the subcontinent where it is primarily grown, where they cannot barely afford a decent cup of tea, London. As a result, in affluent nations like this one, immigrants are marginalized economically as well as racially and culturally. They are denied opportunities due to discrimination. Despite harboring resentment in their hearts, immigrants accept low-paying jobs. For instance, Alsana works as a seamstress and Shamad is a low-paid server. But, the disdain and rage of having their voices and possibilities silenced linger in their hearts. The most affected by this is Millat. He believes that he is being denied every opportunity to be well-known. He is consciously trying to find his own voice since he is sick of the "Englishness" cocoon that has been placed around him. Muslim protests take place in London, and an Islamist group discusses about the marginalized Muslim minorities in the book KEVIN. According to Smith, Millat was aware that he was a Paki no matter where he came from; that he smelled of curry; that he had no sexual orientation; that he took other people's jobs or had no jobs; that he could be a dentist or a shop owner; that he could be a curry shifter; that he couldn't be a footballer or a filmmaker; that he should return to his own country; that he should stay here and earn his bloody keep; that he worshipped elephants. He understood that he had no voice and no face in the nation. Up until the previous week, when suddenly outraged people like Millat were on every radio station, television station, and newspaper. Millat recognized the fury, believed it recognized him, and grasped it with both hands. Minorities are constantly mistreated in multicultural societies, yet they are kept in check, behave legally, and continue to take the abuse. Millat believes he has finally discovered his original voice after a riot by Muslim minority gave him a platform to speak out. His "White Teeth" characters, such as the Bowdens and the Bowers, are primarily first-generation immigrants. Iqbal's descendants, as well as the second generation, which includes Millat, Magid, and Irie Jones. The second generation is in a messier situation than their parents. They are born in the "Nothing space," as Smith put it, and require strong parental direction to discover their true selves, yet their elders are too preoccupied to cope with their own problems or, in other words In terms of assisting them in discovering who they are in the "Nothing Space" that is Britain, words are powerless. The most in need of assistance is Millat Iqbal, yet Shamad has failed as a father. Shamad believes that he is a failure to his children and that moving his family to a distant country was his first mistake. For him, seeking a better life meant sacrificing authenticity and culture. All his life, Millat yearned for the godfather, but all he ever received was Shamad. Shamad signs his name on a wooden bench in the park to indicate that he, too, had left his mark, much like Americans did on the moon and Englishmen did when they named a street in Kerala after their wives. 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The reason "White Teeth" has received such high praise from critics is because it is "An astonishingly assured debut, funny and serious....," as Salman Rushdie puts it. With a contrast of lighthearted and somber tones and in a manner that British critic James Wood dubbed "Hysterical realism," it deals with serious and realistic issues. It covers a vast amount of time and encompasses three cultures that are spread across three families Iqbal, Jones, and Bowden and three generations. All three families encounter the British Isles, British people, and the multicultural society that develops there, but it's interesting to note how each immigrant character responds differently to the common issues that arise in their new environment. It becomes clear that the immigrant children [Magid, Millat, and Irie] initially don't care and accept the global culture and consider themselves to be global citizens. However, they are constantly informed of the issue and told that despite their birthright, they will always be Jamaican, Pakistani, or Indian, never British. The difficulty of "Not Belonging." Others, including family members, keep informing them that there is a problem. The novel highlights the differences between immigrants and their children, for instance, showing that while Millat believes in revolt and that you must revolt to obtain respect and rights, Shamad Miah believes in genetics and that it is not fate but science. The generational divide between them and additional complications are also brought on by this difference in belief. According to Smith, millennial immigrant children may also be the deeper source of the conflict. This century has been marked by strangers of all colors brown, yellow, and white she writes. The century of the great immigrant experiment has passed. When you enter the playground at this hour of the day, you will only see Isaac Leung by the fish pond, Danny Rahman in the football cage, Quang O Rourke bouncing

a basketball, and Irie Jones humming. Children with the same last name and first name are in direct conflict. Name, the hidden mass exodus, crowded vessels and aircraft, chilly arrivals, and medical examinations. Smith does not rule out the possibility that the hardships experienced by their ancestors left a lasting psychological scar on the children of mixed-race and mixed-culture families.

Smith likens England to a massive mirror that serves as a means of correcting people's flaws and weaknesses, whether they be the kind of beauty Irie Jones believed she lacked or their way of life. It is compared to a strange location that cancels out the distinctiveness of various cultures. Irie Jones is a good girl in a bad situation. Irie, according to Smith, believed she was a fat, mixed-race girl who thought she was ugly, but she was unaware that she was very normal, fine, and that she was genetically created with Jamaica and not England in mind. The following passage from the book, "But Irie did not know she was fine," makes this point very clear. Irie was absent of reflection, and England was a mammoth mirror. a foreigner in a foreign land. Irie Jones, the daughter of Clara Jones, who has dark skin, and Archie Jones, who has fair skin, deals with racism and cultural adversity in her own unique way. She has this impression after a fair-skinned professor asks Irie to explain Shakespeare's Sonnet 127 in her British literature class, Mrs. Broody. Smith uses a specific passage from the poem to demonstrate that the speaker was referring to a black or dark-skinned woman: "In the old age black was not counted as fair... My mistress's brows are well-suited, her eyes are raven black, and the mourners appear as a result. Coral is much redder than her lips are red, my mistress's eyes are nothing like the sun, and if snow is white, why are her breasts dull? If hairs are wires, then her head is covered in black wires. Irie is repeatedly questioned about the poem, which both vindicates and insults her. In her response to Irie's query, Mrs. Broody states that the woman to whom William Shakespeare is alluding is not black but rather dark like her (Mrs. Broody), who was very white. Mrs. Broody then advises Irie to refrain from reading old poems and drawing connections to the current situation, but even then, the damage has already been done, and Irie is so incensed as a result that she chooses to straighten her naturally curly Afro hair. She starts making efforts to hide her distinctive physical trait, her curly African hair, which serves as a physical marker of her black identity. She makes the decision to align them. Irie straightens out her naturally curly African hair so that Millat will like her, but Maxine, Nina's partner, reminds her that her natural Afro hair was better and more attractive because it was hers and it reflected her individuality. Black women spend more money on straightening their hair than any other group of women, according to a newspaper article read by another character, Paul King, the owner of the hair salon. This demonstrates how women of other ethnicities are losing the distinctiveness and identity that set them apart from others. They want to fit in and be liked by others, but they are making the exact opposite mistake. In his book "Multiculturalism," Rattansi claims that people in multicultural settings should come together over their differences just as much as they do over their similarities. The tolerant multicultural society will be made by people coming together over their individuality. However, two experienced black hairdressers are aware that no matter how long Irie wants to keep her hair straight like the white women, sooner or later the Jamaican roots will show through and the curls will naturally return. According to Smith, Jackie and Denise "knew full well that curled African hair follicle will ultimately follow its genetic instructions."

The novel heavily relies on history. What is past is prologue, as Zadie Smith famously said at the beginning of her book. Smith details the history of immigrants, including their migration from their home country to the host country. According to Smith, a new history begins the moment an immigrant steps foot on the host country. They represent a "clean slate," or *tabula rasa*, in the sense that new history will be written on them. In the book, Shamad Iqbal holds the great freedom fighter Mangal Pandey to be a member of his family and descended from him. He relates his relationship to the great Mangal Pandey and how he was the cause of the Mutiny in his own unique way. While Archie Jones disagrees and presents a different account of the past history of freedom based on the relevant historical texts. According to Shamad, he is constantly trying to figure out how he is related to Pandey, his paternal grandfather. He also continues to look into history in order to determine who he is and to demonstrate that he comes from a long line of notable individuals. Shamad responds to Archie's claim that history books cannot be false by saying, "Archibald, just because the words exist, it does not follow that they are a true representation of the character of Mangal Pandey." Shamad wants Archie to understand that just because an immigrant's history is oral rather than written does not necessarily mean that it is untrue. Furthermore, one shouldn't believe anything written about an immigrant, especially if it wasn't written by the immigrant themselves. Smith argues that there are various versions of history. It is deeply ingrained in the immigrants and manifests itself in the behaviors of their offspring who are born abroad. She holds that history and heritage are ingrained in the genetic level and will occasionally surface. Shamad reluctantly kidnaps his own son and sends him to Bangladesh to become devoted to the Bangla people because he loves his son Magid more than he loves his son Millat. Shamad believes that London has corrupted him, but he can still save his one son and raise him to be a true Muslim. However, this does not occur, and he tends to

lean toward genetics, a field that writes new chapters in human history. He starts avoiding his own family by starting work with Marcus and Joyce Chalfen. As a result, the issue of generational drift is also evident. Shamad believes that both of his sons, as well as himself, have failed him in every way.

Conclusion:

When a girl reads Marcus Chalfen's book about the Mouse experiment, she expresses her fears about how science has come to resemble the dangerous science-fiction world. No one working in the new field, doing truly visionary work, can be certain of making it through this century or the next without getting blood on his palm, according to a quote from the book. Stop the work, though? Gag on Einstein? Heisenberg's hands be bound? What do you have to work toward? In the end, various minorities unite to protest the launch of the Future Mouse Project, each with their own unique organizations and philosophies. Characters oppose the Future Mouse because they disagree with the notion that others should have complete control over a person's destiny and fate. Some see it as an opportunity to demonstrate the power of the minority group by uniting and wreaking havoc like group KEVIN. Millat is going to murder Dr. Peret in this group. While a Jehovah's Witness group from Jamaica has come to oppose them due to their race and religion. In short, Future Mouse Project gives the minority group a chance to speak up and assert their existence. Because Millat was determined to establish a point and believed Marcus Chalfen's science to be evil, he wanted to put an end to it and save Kevin by becoming a hero. While Marcus and other scientists should not interfere with creation, according to Shamad, who sees it as God's domain. "If you meddle with a creature, the very nature of creature, even if it is a mouse, you walk into the arena that is God's: Creation," he tells Magid, telling her to stop supporting this western idea. In addition to dividing Magid from his father, these religious differences also divide him from his twin Millat. Familial disintegration is highlighted as a significant issue. At the conclusion, Irie is back in Jamaica, where she is at ease and content with having a daughter who is "a puppet clipped from a paternal string?" Accidentally shattering the mouse's glass, Archie Jones witnesses the mouse who is also viewed as an immigrant—moving toward freedom and away from the people who were holding it captive. Smith leaves the reader with a glimmer of hope. She wants to imply that achieving a sense of freedom and identity is never too late. And with that, she adds, "Go on, my son!"

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