

In Zadie Smith's *White Teeth*, each of the characters have some connection to the "great immigrant experiment" "in the century of strangers, brown, yellow and white" (326). The novel "accommodates conflicting voices" of the members of the two main multicultural families and thereby avoids reducing the discourse on multiculturalism to a homogenous concept (Fernandez, "Exploring Hybridity" 150). Moreover, he emphasizes the setting in the North West London suburbs as "the hybridised metropolitan sites that produce variety and surprise" (171). The 'third space' following the Second World War as Britain becomes multicultural is what makes Archie's and Samad's continued friendship possible and what creates the relationships the novel centers around. Moreover, this 'third space' is what we witness in the setting of multicultural North West London and its various social spaces, most importantly Glenard Oak Comprehensive and O'Connell's, as well as some outdoor spaces. All these settings are what Ribo call 'functional settings': They lay out "space as a multidimensional stage for the development of the plot," so it provides topographical support for "the development of characters or the unfolding of events" (Ribo 39–40). Finding a way to handle these aspects are crucial in order to settle down in a place and to truly belong, in what Pope refers to as "creating a convincing life world" and Siccardi calls 'Becoming', the process of finding one's place in society by "the recovery of one's territory, only with new modalities" (Pope 10; Siccardi 224). Smith's variety of characters enables her to play around with different attitudes and dynamics between characters, making this a novel that studies the human condition, also outside the frame of the postcolonial. Some of the issues that the characters struggle with, are also relevant for others, caught as we all are in between 'globalising influences' and 'personal dispositions' in times of rapid change, as Giddens have argued (1, 3–5). There are, of course, no simple paths to constructing one's identity in 'high modernity' and in the modern, multicultural metropolis. According to Gunning, Smith acknowledges this in the way she avoids any tendencies towards a "simplistic account of human nature" (128). Smith herself has stated about her novel that "I wasn't trying to .(write about race. I was trying to write about the country I live in" (qtd.in Jones