

of ethnically, culturally and religiously diverse characters – mainly, Anglo-Jamaican, Bangladeshi and Jewish – adjusting, negotiating and creating a sense of "Britishness" and a sense of belonging in the city of London at three different historical periods of time: the Second World War and post-war years, the period of social changes of the 1980s, and the late 1990s. Critical reviews on *White Teeth* did not cease to highlight the novel's multiethnic, multiracial and multicultural aspect (Russo 2000; Hanks 2002; Mason 2005). In this respect, the characters in *White Teeth* are the epitome of hybridity and cultural diversity. Their initial common feature is the shared-spatial locus of the city of London. The spatial dimension is, thus, central to the novel. The metropolis is the backdrop that channels social interaction and becomes the primary space of possibility; a place where a homogeneous and united view of "Britishness" is challenged and where contesting spatial representations materialise: "It is to the city that the migrants, the minorities, the diasporic come to change the history of the nation ... it is the city which provides the space in which emergent identifications and new social movements of the people are played out" (Bhabha 2004: 243). Hence, inter and intra family relations among ethnically-diverse characters are the central motif of the novel during the second period (the 1980s), and the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion in religious and scientific group associations pertain social space in the last part of the novel (the 1990s). Accordingly, Smith's portrayal of the social configuration(s) of this multicultural space since the early 1940s to the late 1990s can be argued to develop around the networks of relations created with the encounters and dis-encounters of such a variety of characters. This newly acquired multicultural aspect of Britain is explored in the novel in the subsequent decades.